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THE WEEK

THE BEST OF THE U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

Four more years?

How Republicans made their case
for a second term of Trump's
disruptive presidency

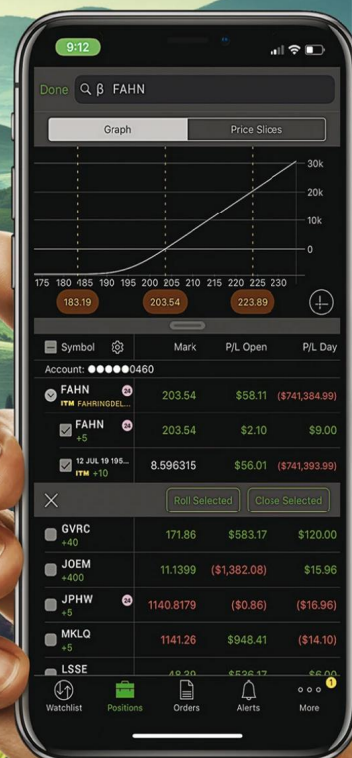
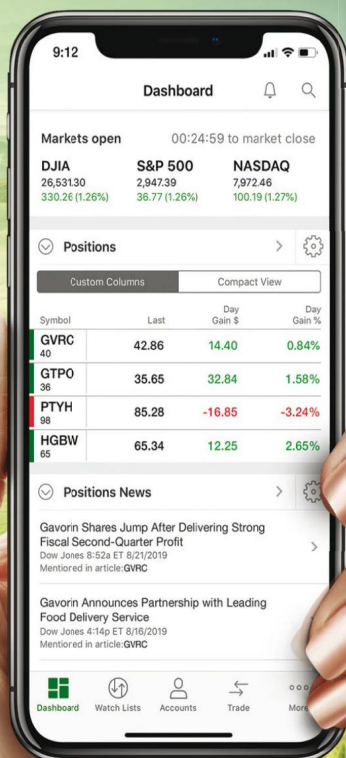
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Editor's letter

Historian Henry Adams once defined politics as the “systematic organization of hatreds.” It was true in the Civil War era, and just as true today. In 2020, who you hate is who you are. Voters are largely driven by what they’re against, rather than what they’re for. Political scientists call this phenomenon negative partisanship, and its dominance has been on full display at both the Democratic and Republican national conventions. At the Democrats’ soiree, a parade of speakers from former President Obama to several disaffected Republicans echoed the same message: Our nation cannot survive another four years of Donald Trump, who has shown he “will tear our democracy down if that’s what it takes to win.” The Republicans this week countered with dire warnings that Democrats “won’t let you go to church” and will empty the prisons and fire the police and “invite MS-13 to live next door.” It’s a far cry from Ronald Reagan’s “shining city on a hill” or Obama’s “hope and change,” but as political scientist

Rachel Bitecofer observes, “Partisanship is a hell of a drug, especially when it’s cut with a heavy dose of existential fear.”

It’s hard to dispute the point. Both Democratic and Republican partisans, research has found, have come to despise the other tribe and their elected leaders more than they like their own leaders. Ticket splitting by voters has become rare, and in any given election, 90 percent of Democrats and Republicans vote for their party’s nominee. Harnessing fear and hatred can drive turnout, which has become the key to winning national elections. But as America stumbles further down this road, we are headed toward profound danger: For democracies to function, voters and parties must be willing to accept defeat. Once the votes are counted, the losers must concede that their opponents have a legitimate, if temporary, claim on power. Will that happen this November—and if it doesn’t, what then?

William Falk
Editor-in-chief

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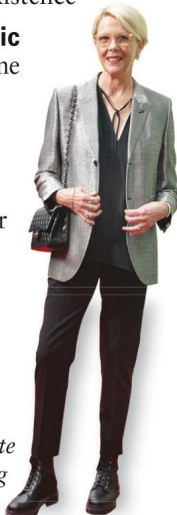


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THE WEEK

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The GOP's case for a second Trump term

What happened

The Republican Party nominated Donald Trump for a second term this week, at a virtual convention whose opening message focused less on what Trump will accomplish if he's re-elected than on the ravages America will suffer if he's not. On the first night, speaker after speaker cast Joe Biden as a tool of the "radical left" who will unleash what Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina called "a fundamentally different America"—a dystopian nightmare where freedoms are curtailed, "mobs" invade the suburbs, and rioters and criminals run rampant. "They'll disarm you, empty the prisons, lock you in your home, and invite MS-13 to live next door," said Rep. Matt Gaetz of Florida. The second night struck a softer tone, featuring Trump pardoning a black bank robber and presiding over a naturalization ceremony for five immigrants of color. In a video segment, female aides lauded him as a "champion for women."

The convention broke from previous norms in a number of ways. The Republican Party declined to create a platform, instead saying it "will continue to enthusiastically support the president's America-first agenda." Prominent Republicans—including sitting governors, senators, and former president George W. Bush—steered clear of the event, which featured addresses by seven Trump family members. And traditional boundaries between campaigning and governing were repeatedly crossed, with the White House regularly used as a setting. Trump was slated to appear all four nights; speaking Monday from the convention hall in Charlotte, N.C., he issued a warning about Democratic voter fraud. "They're using Covid to steal the election," he said.

On the eve of the convention, more than two dozen former GOP members of Congress endorsed Joe Biden, including former Sens. Jeff Flake of Arizona and John Warner of Virginia. Days earlier, more than 70 Republican former national-security officials from the Reagan and both Bush administrations issued a letter calling out Trump's "assault on our nation's values and institutions" and pledging support for Biden. It's time to "reinstate the moral foundations of our democracy," they wrote.

What the editorials said

"The Grand Old Party has become little more than a Trump booster club," said *USA Today*. In his first term, Trump has "systematically trashed" most of the principles the party once held dear, including limited government, fiscal responsibility, and "moral rectitude." Republicans who once embraced these tenets "have spent the past three and a half years sticking their heads in the sand." As their convention devolves into "an extravaganza of adulation," they "have only themselves to blame for



At the RNC, the president was the platform.

allowing Trump to transform a once proud party into a cult."

"The Republican Party deserves a platform," said the *National Review*. Granted, party platforms "are often intensively negotiated word salads read only by the party's enemies." Still, the Democrats produced a detailed, 92-page manifesto making clear "what they wish to do with power." The Trump campaign issued only a vague list of "aspirations" such as "Teach American Exceptionalism." Voters can only conclude that "the platform is Trump himself."

What the columnists said

The convention's most jarring element is "the sheer unbridled messianism that's been on display," said Greg Sargent in *Washington Post.com*. One speaker after another has lauded Trump's courage, "infinite benevolence," economic genius, and "uniformly perfect" handling of the pandemic that's killed 180,000 Americans and infected nearly 6 million. None of this bizarre overkill is likely to persuade independent voters, but "perhaps the goal is merely to please the Audience of One."

"Don't fool yourselves, libs," said Matt Lewis in *TheDailyBeast.com*. The convention has been "stunningly effective." Smug liberals may see "propaganda so blatant that everyone can see through the lies," but once again they're forgetting not everyone sees things as they do. Yes, Trump is a dismal failure, but the masterful staging "has worked to present him as a good and decent president," and reminded wavering heartland voters that the enemy is "the Left, radical protesters, and the media." That will be enough to bring some of them back to Trump. "Expect this race to tighten." In a tough re-election climate, there's "a point of political light" for Republicans, said Timothy Carney in *WashingtonExaminer.com*: "the lawlessness and disorder in American cities." As peaceful

protests against police brutality give way "to naked looting and anarchist violence," Republicans see a way to lure back white suburban voters.

The convention finally gave Trump "the miracle" he has predicted, said Stephen Collinson and Maeve Reston in *CNN.com*: "The pandemic did just disappear." While in the real world more than 1,000 Americans were still dying from Covid-19 every day and unemployment remained above 10 percent, speakers glossed over the pandemic as a "vanquished threat"—if they mentioned it at all. In her speech, Melania Trump finally offered some sympathy for the dead and their families. Even then, the administration's "culture of denial" was in evidence: Few in the Rose Garden crowd wore masks or maintained safe social distance.

What next?

He faces an uphill climb, but "a Trump victory is far from impossible," said William Galston in *The Wall Street Journal*. The Democratic convention opened up some "political vulnerabilities," including a lack of outreach to white working-class voters who may decide Midwestern swing states. In 2016, poll analyst Nate Silver was ridiculed for giving Trump a 30 percent chance of winning. Today, he puts the odds at 26 percent. "That seems about right." Trump is actually pulling better numbers in some swing-state polls than he was at this time in 2016, said Jim VandeHei and Jonathan Swan in *Axios.com*. The economy may be hurting, but the stock market is "on fire," and many blue-collar workers in the building trades "are doing quite well, too." Trump's "floor of support holds strong, regardless of what he says or does." A recent poll shows that 13 percent of voters remain in play—"enough to tip the election."

Postmaster general grilled over mail delays

What happened

House Democrats accused Postmaster General Louis DeJoy this week of crippling Postal Service operations in order to sabotage mail-in voting on President Trump's behalf, charges the Republican megadonor furiously denied in heated testimony. After DeJoy's June appointment, the agency cut costs by removing hundreds of blue mailboxes and mail-sorting machines and reducing overtime pay for carriers stretched thin by the pandemic. Reports soon poured in from across the country of delayed deliveries of prescriptions, bills, and even baby chickens—thousands of which died en route to New England farmers. "How can one person screw this up so fast?" asked Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-Mass.). DeJoy announced last week that cost-cutting measures would be suspended until after the Nov. 3 election and told Congress the service "is ready today to handle whatever volume of election mail it receives." He rejected Democratic calls to reinstall sorting machines, saying it was unnecessary.



DeJoy: Won't undo service changes

The House approved a bill that would give the USPS \$25 billion in emergency funds and reverse DeJoy's operational changes. The bill appeared unlikely to advance in the Senate, where Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) accused Democrats of peddling "overblown conspiracy theories." Fueling allegations of Trump administration meddling in the Postal Service—which is supposed to be an independent, nonpolitical agency—multiple news outlets reported last week that Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin pushed for the appointment of DeJoy because Trump wanted a GOP-friendly postmaster general who would run the agency like a business.

What the editorials said

The "fevered criticism" of DeJoy is embarrassing, said *National Review.com*. At least two Democratic representatives want him investigated for crimes, and progressives on Twitter are "highlighting any mailbox put out of commission as a sign of looming totalitarianism." All DeJoy is guilty of is trying to reform an agency that is expected to lose \$54 billion over the next decade.

It's hard to believe DeJoy's changes "don't stem from Trump's near-obsessive hostility toward the Postal Service," said the Co-

lumbus, Ohio, *Dispatch*. He has long called for its privatization and complains that the agency is shedding money because it gives Amazon—owned by Jeff Bezos, also owner of the Trump-critical *Washington Post*—a "sweetheart deal" on last-mile delivery. Trump and DeJoy need to stop treating the USPS as a money-making business and recognize that it's a service, "one critical to keeping Americans connected and informed."

What the columnists said

DeJoy proved during his House hearing that he "either does not grasp or cannot execute the mission" of his agency, said Jennifer

Rubin in *WashingtonPost.com*. He was unable to cite the cost of a postcard stamp (35 cents) or ballpark the number of Americans who voted by mail in 2016 (33 million). When asked about overtime cuts that have impacted service, DeJoy—a wealthy former logistics manager—claimed he hadn't ordered them and didn't know who had. Seemingly his only qualification for the job is his willingness "to serve Trump's grudges and conspiratorial paranoia."

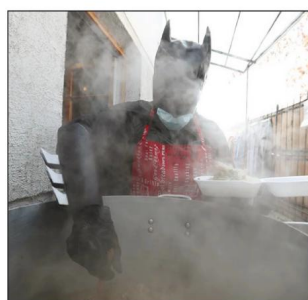
Criticism of DeJoy is overblown, said Jordan Weissmann in *Slate.com*. USPS documents show that the on-time delivery rate for first-class mail fell by about 8.1 percent after mid-July, when DeJoy ordered carriers to start their routes on time and leave mail behind if the sorting process ran late. But about 95 percent of first-class mail still arrives on time or no more than a day behind schedule. There is, however, a package backlog caused by a surge in online shopping during the pandemic. "If you're waiting on a shipment of heart meds or insulin, USPS's package issues are likely at play."

During a Senate hearing last week, DeJoy did concede that his timetabling changes have caused worse-than-anticipated delays, said Russell Berman in *TheAtlantic.com*. Worryingly, he couldn't offer a guarantee on when deliveries would get back up to speed and suggested he hadn't even examined how his changes would affect "key postal customer bases, such as seniors and military veterans." The question that the agency's struggles raises is a familiar one in the Trump era: "Are they the result of malice, or simple incompetence?" If DeJoy's policies "precipitate an election nightmare in November, the answer won't make much of a difference."

It wasn't all bad

■ After more than 100 years, a rare species has returned to Seattle's Mount Rainier National Park. Wolverines—large, aggressive members of the weasel family—used to be common from Canada to Colorado, but they have steadily migrated northward, leaving only a few hundred in the lower 48 states. Last week, camera stations set by scientists discovered a female wolverine and two babies living in the park. "It's really, really exciting," said park superintendent Chip Jenkins. "It tells us that we're doing a good job of managing our wilderness."

■ There is a masked crusader on the streets of Santiago, Chile, this summer. But rather than fighting criminals, Solidarity Batman delivers hot meals. Months of lockdown have caused hardship in Chile, where unemployment has reached a record 12 percent. Recently, an unidentified man has been



A hero for the Covid era

donning a full Batman suit, plus a surgical mask for coronavirus protection, and traveling through the capital city sharing sympathy and plates of food. Almost anyone can be like him, the everyday superhero says. "Look around you, see if you can dedicate a little time, a little food, a little shelter, a word sometimes of encouragement to those who need it."

■ Willie Fairley watched as a powerful windstorm devastated his Iowa community. Luckily, the grill at his restaurant, Willie Ray's Q Shack, was unharmed, so he started using it to feed some of the many people left without power. Fairley provides some 500 free meals a day to his fellow Iowans, who recently presented him with a "thank you" banner full of signatures. "He just pulls up to devastated neighborhoods," said resident Kelly McDonald, "getting his smoker out and feeding people." Why? "Because if it was me home with nothing," says Fairley, "I would want someone to at least be able to provide something for me."

Democratic convention: Did Biden make his case?

"The kindness was the point," said Zack Beauchamp in *Vox.com*. Last week's "virtual" Democratic convention, ingeniously redesigned for the Covid era, focused on the character and failures of President Trump, contrasted with the "fundamental decency" of the Democratic nominee, Joe Biden. When the White House is occupied by "a cruel man whose indifference to ordinary Americans has killed tens of thousands" in the pandemic, who has vengefully taken migrant toddlers away from their parents, and who has deliberately stoked racial and cultural animus and divided the country, the prospect of a president who might actually *care* about people, and do what it takes to protect them, offered "an off-ramp." Speaker after speaker, most memorably a 13-year-old boy Biden befriended and counseled on overcoming his stutter, highlighted the nominee's deep reserves of empathy, acquired over a lifetime of personal tragedy. Biden himself had to close the sale, said Frank Bruni in *NYTimes.com*, and "he absolutely did." In a flawless, forceful 24-minute live address, the 77-year-old candidate not only disproved Trump's disgraceful accusations of senility but movingly pitched himself as an optimistic, resilient public servant uniquely qualified to, in Biden's words, "overcome this season of darkness in America."



Biden with his wife, Jill

It may be smart for Biden to appeal to voters' "nostalgia for the recent past," said Sarah Jones in *NYMag.com*. Even some Republicans are pining for the relative normalcy of the pre-Trump era—hence the convention speeches from Republican never-Trumpers John Kasich and Colin Powell. But will Biden's promise of a return to normal and to bipartisan compromise fire up the Democrats' progressive base? The young activists who represent the party's future want "revolution," not a return to the status quo of unchecked climate change, wealth inequality, and racial

injustice. Clearly, Democrats were worried that Trump's "smears about 'left-wing' mobs" might frighten moderate voters, said Amy Davidson Sorkin in *NewYorker.com*. But they overcompensated, and treated progressive voters almost as an afterthought.

This was a "four-day exercise in sleight of hand," said Matthew Continetti in *The Washington Free Beacon*. We heard time and again how Biden, with his undeniable decency and empathy, will heal America's wounds and "Build Back Better," as the title of Biden's economic plan puts it. But the speakers were "awfully vague" about what this would mean in practice for the blue-collar voters that Democrats are supposedly trying to recapture. The increasingly desperate working families of America want "concrete plans to improve their lives," said Ronald Brownstein in *TheAtlantic.com*. Biden has released a detailed job-creation agenda, but at the convention provided only uplifting rhetoric about brighter tomorrows. As they did in 2016, Democrats may come to regret not directing "a more targeted economic appeal at the voters Trump is relying on most."

Voters now have seen plenty of Trump, said Isaac Schorr in *NationalReview.com*. He's chosen to be "the president of Charlottesville and QAnon," the mean-spirited man who again last week attacked the late Republican war hero John McCain as "a lousy candidate." When the only alternative is Trump, "Biden's kind and reasonable affect should be more than enough to deliver him the White House." Biden may be a throwback to a backslapping era when Democrats and Republicans made deals in hideaway Senate offices, said Michael Gerson in *The Washington Post*. But "civility, bipartisanship, basic decency, and public service are not mere nostalgia." These virtues are "the moral architecture of democracy," and they truly will be on the ballot this November.

Only in America

■ Wealthy New Yorkers in the Hamptons are hiring a doctor to screen their party guests for the coronavirus. Dr. Asma Rashid says the tests she administers can cost up to \$500 per partygoer, but getting results in 10 minutes enables normal festivities. "Instead of having hors d'oeuvres at the party," Rashid told *CNN.com*, "now the theme is let's do rapid testing."

■ A scheduled speaker at the Republican National Convention withdrew after it was reported she had urged her Twitter followers to read a QAnon conspiracy message claiming that Jewish bankers were scheming to "make the goyim destroy each other." Mary Ann Mendoza, an "angel mom" whose son was killed by a car driven by an illegal immigrant, later said she had not read "the whole message."

Good week for:

Stealth, after a group of unknown intruders, working under cover of darkness, slipped like ninjas into a popular ninja museum in Iga City, Japan, cracked the safe, and made off with more than a million yen (\$9,470). "It was a three-minute job," said an impressed ninja-museum official.

Omens, with a warning from NASA that a small asteroid, 2018VP1, may hit Earth on Nov. 2, the day before the U.S. presidential election. Fortunately, the asteroid is less than 7 feet across, meaning it will likely burn up in the atmosphere.

Watery beer, after a California man saved his workshop from the wildfires by pouring his supply of Bud Light on the flames until firefighters arrived. "My buddies all tease me about drinking water-beer," said Chad Little, but "I say, 'Hey, saved my shop.'"

Bad week for:

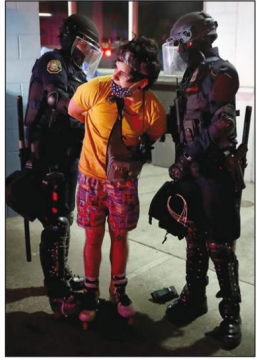
Getting along, after an Indian woman filed for divorce from her husband, citing his refusal to argue with her. "Whenever I make a mistake, he always forgives me," the woman complained to a judge. "I am feeling suffocated in such an environment."

Microaggressions, with new research suggesting that people now in their teens and early 20s—"Generation Z"—find the use of periods in text messages by older people to be "hostile."

Machismo, after Robert O'Neill, a former Navy SEAL who claims to have killed Osama bin Laden, tweeted a photo of himself maskless aboard a Delta flight, above the caption, "I am not a pussy." O'Neill was banned from future Delta flights, and when his tweet disappeared, he wrote, "I didn't delete my tweet. My wife did."

New York State seeks Eric Trump testimony

New York State Attorney General Letitia James has asked a judge to compel testimony from President Trump's son Eric Trump as part of an expanding inquiry into the Trump Organization's accounting practices. The probe dates to March 2019, when the president's former personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, told Congress his old boss "inflated his total assets when it served his purposes, such as trying to be listed among the wealthiest people in *Forbes*, and deflated his assets to reduce his real estate taxes." James' court filing comes weeks after Eric canceled a scheduled interview with investigators. The Trump Organization's executive vice president said that the new demand was "dropped on the eve of the Republican convention for political points."



Three months of protest

police looked on, the two groups clashed for two violence-filled hours, beating each other with metal rods, sticks, and bats while also hurling rocks and bottles and spraying noxious chemical solutions across a skirmish line. Both sides wore armor and used makeshift shields. Police said they let the battles continue because they “appeared to involve willing participants” and the police lacked sufficient resources to intervene. Several combatants were injured, including Dakota Means, a 25-year-old former Marine who took a paintball to the eye. “They’re not welcome in the city,” he said of the far right-wing counter-protesters. “I’m gonna make sure they’re ran out.”

Sturgis, S.D.

Super-spreader event: Coronavirus cases connected to the massive Sturgis motorcycle rally mounted this week as health officials in eight states worked furiously to contain potential outbreaks. Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming all confirmed infections linked to the rally. The total stands at more than 100, and Kris Ehresmann, the infectious disease director at the Minnesota Department of Health, said she expected “many more” in the wake of the 10-day event. Analysis of cellphone



Maskless crowds

data from patrons revealed that 61 percent of U.S. counties saw at least one person return from Sturgis, where dense, crowds milled together at bars and concerts. “I sat at a bar elbow-to-elbow with guys,” said Stephen Sample from Arizona. “No one was wearing masks.”

Portland, Ore.

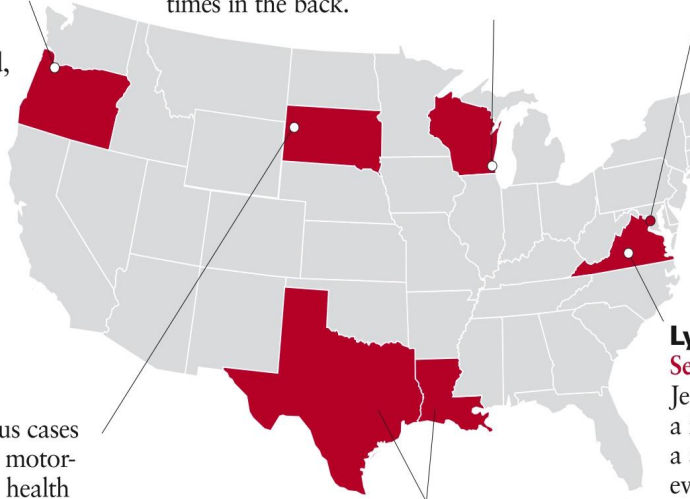
Street battles:

More than 100 right-wing militia members and Proud Boys squared off this week with demonstrators and antifa last week as Black Lives Matter protests approached a third month. While Portland

Kenosha, Wis.

Vigilante shooting:

A police shooting of an unarmed black man in the back sparked protests and violence this week, and a 17-year-old was charged with murder after he allegedly mounted a vigilante attack on a crowd of Black Lives Matter protesters that left two dead. Kyle Rittenhouse allegedly opened fire with an AR-15 on demonstrators protesting the police shooting of Jacob Blake in front of his three sons after he pulled away from them and tried to get in his car. About 500 cops and National Guardsmen used tear gas to drive protesters from the county courthouse toward a gas station, where they were met by members of an armed militia. Earlier, police reportedly thanked militia members for their help in defending the city against looters. Three cops are now on administrative leave, and Blake’s family says the 29-year-old father of five is paralyzed after being shot seven times in the back.



Texas, Louisiana

Bracing for the storm: Nearly 1.5 million residents of southeastern Texas and western Louisiana were told to evacuate this week as Hurricane Laura barreled toward the region with a ferocity not seen there in a decade. With maximum winds potentially exceeding 120 mph, Laura was forecast to make landfall late Wednesday night, as *The Week* went to press, as a “catastrophic” Category 4 hurricane. Depending on the timing of its arrival, the storm was expected to whip high tide into surges of 10 to 15 feet and push Gulf waters as far as 30 miles inland, or all the way to cities such as Lake Charles. Heavy rains of 5 to 10 inches were expected, although that’s far short of the 50 inches dumped by Hurricane Harvey, which arrived almost three years ago to the day. “This will be moving, unlike Harvey, which stalled,” said Josh Lichter, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service. “The threat here is wind and storm surge.”

Washington, D.C.

Family drama:

Senior White House adviser Kellyanne Conway said she would resign from the administration at the end of the month after her 15-year-old daughter, Claudia, posted a video to social media saying that her mother’s job had “ruined her life.” Conway’s announcement came the same day that her husband, George, announced that he would withdraw from the Lincoln Project, a pro-Biden political action committee he co-founded with other current and former Republicans. George, a prominent Washington, D.C., conservative lawyer and frequent Trump critic, has feuded publicly with Trump and questioned his mental fitness. Claudia has long been active on social media, often criticizing her parents. In a tweet storm, she said she was “officially pushing for emancipation” and later told her followers she’d experienced years of childhood trauma and abuse. Kellyanne said her exit from the public stage would mean “less drama, more mama” for the Conways’ four children.



‘Less drama’

Lynchburg, Va.

Sex scandal: Liberty University president Jerry Falwell Jr. resigned this week after a former pool boy claimed to have had a seven-year sexual relationship with the evangelical leader and his wife. Giancarlo Granda, 29, said he met the Falwells at the Fontainebleau Miami Beach hotel in March 2012—and that over ensuing years he repeatedly had sex with Becki Falwell, 53, in hotels in New York and Miami hotels and at the couple’s home in Virginia while Jerry watched. The Falwells say that Becki did have an affair with Granda but deny that her husband participated. Michael Cohen, President Trump’s former lawyer, suggested that Granda had blackmailed Falwell, and that Cohen had been called in to ensure that photos “were not released to the public.” Falwell, 58, had already been suspended by Liberty after photos emerged of him posing next to a woman with his pants unzipped aboard a yacht owned by NASCAR mogul Rick Hendrick. He’ll now get \$10.5 million in severance.



Denies he liked to watch

Wilmslow, U.K.

Serial killings? British police are investigating allegations that the deaths of five elderly couples in suspected murder-suicides were actually slayings committed by a serial killer who has been at large for nearly 25 years. Stephanie Davies, a senior coroner's officer in northwest England, raised concerns that the deaths of Howard and Bea Ainsworth in April 1996 and Donald and Auriel Ward in November 1999—all in the wealthy town of Wilmslow—were in fact murders committed by an unknown third party. Davies has identified at least three other cases from across the U.K. that closely match the circumstances of the Wilmslow deaths, in which a husband with no history of domestic violence was said to have stabbed and bludgeoned his wife to death before committing suicide.

Nicosia, Cyprus

Russia's doorway to EU: Russian oligarchs have been buying Cypriot citizenship so they can travel, work, and bank in the whole of the European Union. From 2017 to 2019, more than 1,000 wealthy Russians took advantage of Cyprus' offer of citizenship to those who invest at least \$2.5 million in the small Mediterranean EU member, according to an *Al Jazeera* investigation. At least nine of the Russians are billionaires, and many have connections to the Kremlin. While Cyprus has now

banned "politically exposed" people from seeking citizenship, those who have already gained it may keep their passports. Cypriot citizenship allows Russians to stash their money abroad without being subject to the U.S. and EU financial sanctions enacted on Russia for human rights abuses and the 2014 annexation of Crimea.

Caracas

Persecuting Covid patients: The Venezuelan regime is treating the coronavirus as a national-security threat, labeling both the infected and those who may have been exposed as "bioterrorists." The crackdown is causing people with symptoms to hide and defer treatment, which only exacerbates the outbreak. Thousands of Venezuelans who had fled to neighboring countries, trying to escape the economic calamity caused by President Nicolás Maduro's mismanagement, have returned in recent months as their host nations grapple with their own coronavirus outbreaks and jobs for migrants disappear. Venezuelan authorities are imprisoning returnees in makeshift quarantine centers and dosing them with unproven drugs. In the city of San Cristóbal, Maduro loyalists are marking the homes of those suspected to have the disease with plaques and threatening them with arrest. "This is the only country in the world where having Covid is a crime," said opposition activist Sergio Hidalgo.

La Paz, Bolivia

Morales accused of child rape: Bolivia's Justice Ministry has charged former President Evo Morales, 60, with statutory rape and human trafficking over an alleged five-year relationship with a teenager, now age 19. Morales, a leftist and the country's first indigenous leader, was forced from power last year following a disputed election and is now living in exile in Argentina. Officials say they have text messages, photos, and audio files proving there was "a relationship of infatuation" between the two. But the alleged victim says police denied her a lawyer and pressured her into claiming a relationship. A spokesperson for Morales said the charges were politically motivated, noting that Morales' former finance minister and chosen successor, Luis Arce, is beating interim president Jeanine Áñez, a right-winger, in the polls ahead of the October election.

Minsk, Belarus

Not backing down: As tens of thousands march through Minsk to demand his resignation following the rigged Aug. 9 election, Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko this week posted a video online of himself flying over the capital, dressed in riot gear and toting a Kalashnikov-style rifle. "They ran away like rats," Lukashenko says as the helicopter approaches one of his Minsk homes. In another video, Lukashenko—who has ruled Belarus for 26 years—and his 15-year-old son, Kolya, also armed, thank riot police protecting the residence. Authorities have arrested and tortured thousands of protesters, but exiled opposition leader Svetlana Tikhonovskaya said this week that pro-democracy activists will keep marching and "will not relent."



Lukashenko

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Detained for not social distancing

Brasília**Bolsonaro threatens reporter:**

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro is facing a backlash after telling a reporter, "I'd like to punch you in the mouth." The reporter, from leading newspaper *O Globo*, had asked why a militia-linked former police officer had paid some \$16,000 to Bolsonaro's wife, Michelle. Soon, dozens of other reporters began tweeting and retweeting the question, followed by thousands of ordinary Brazilians. The ex-officer, Fabrício Queiroz, is currently under house arrest as part of a corruption inquiry involving Bolsonaro's eldest son, Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro. The president, who battled a case of Covid-19 in July, said this week that journalists are "wimps" and more likely to die from the coronavirus.



The Bolsonaros

Jerusalem

Pompeo campaigns for Trump: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo drew widespread condemnation this week for using his position as the nation's top diplomat to endorse President Trump for re-election. Addressing the Republican National Convention by video from Jerusalem, with holy sites in the background, Pompeo said Trump's "America First" policy "may not have made him popular in every foreign capital, but it has worked."



Message from Israel

Pompeo was in Israel on an official trip. Since at least World War II, no secretary of state has overtly engaged in presidential electioneering. This year, the State Department warned employees against political campaigning in a memo, saying that "Senate-confirmed presidential appointees may not even attend a political party convention or convention-related event."

Pyongyang

Sister steps up: Kim Jong Un's younger sister is effectively running one of the most important political bodies in North Korea. The South Korean Defense Ministry said this week that it appears Kim Yo Jong, 32, now heads the Workers' Party's Organization and Guidance Department, which deals with ideological indoctrination and political appointments. That could mean she is being groomed as at least a temporary successor to her brother, who is believed to have three young children. Rumors that the dictator has been in a months-long coma, and his public appearances faked, were quashed this week when Kim Jong Un, 36, appeared at a party meeting and warned that the country must prepare for an approaching typhoon.



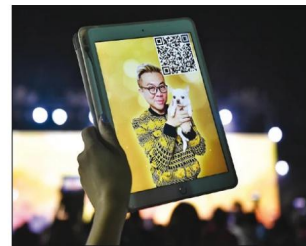
The Kim siblings

Hong Kong

Covid reinfection: Hong Kong has recorded the world's first confirmed case of Covid-19 reinfection, a 33-year-old man whose infection was detected at an airport on his return to the city from Europe. The man had moderate symptoms during his first bout, in March, but showed no symptoms during his second infection, suggesting his immune system protected him from the disease while not stopping the reinfection. An infected person without symptoms can still spread the virus to others. That's why, epidemiologists say, a vaccine will be necessary to suppress the spread, even for people who have already recovered. Genomic analysis showed that the Hong Kong man had a different strain of the coronavirus than the one he'd been infected with in the spring. Hours after the Hong Kong case was reported, scientists announced that a patient in Belgium and another in the Netherlands had also been reinfected.

Bangkok

Censoring social media: Facebook this week blocked access in Thailand to a 1 million-member group where people openly discuss the country's monarchy, after the Thai government threatened legal action against the social-media giant. Anyone who insults the royal family can be sentenced to up to 15 years in prison for each comment, and the law has been applied strictly since the Thai military took over in a 2014 coup. The Facebook group Royalist Marketplace was founded in April by Pavin Chachavalponpun, a Thai professor living in Japan, and quickly saw its membership rocket, because it was the only place where Thais could challenge their political system. Thailand is currently being shaken by a wave of pro-democracy protests, with some demonstrators calling for the monarchy to be reformed.



Supporting Pavin

Abuja, Nigeria

No more wild polio: The entire continent of Africa is now free of wild polio, after it was announced this week that a massive vaccination campaign had eradicated the paralytic disease from Nigeria. It's a huge win for health-care workers in the country, which accounted for more than half of all global cases less than a decade ago. The last area to be vaccinated was Borno state in northern Nigeria, where Islamist terrorist group Boko Haram held sway and vaccination teams had to brave the insurgency. The wild strain still circulates in Afghanistan and Pakistan. And every year, hundreds of African children are infected with vaccine-derived poliovirus, a mutated form of the disease that can spring up in areas where there is only partial vaccination coverage.

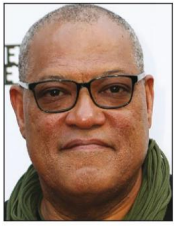


Administering the vaccine

Canberra, Australia

Quit jailing kids: After years of activism from Aboriginal rights groups, an Australian region has taken the first step to raise the age of incarceration from 10 to 14. Of the nearly 600 children ages 10 to 13 who were imprisoned as adults in Australia last year, more than 65 percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. Indigenous people make up only 3 percent of Australia's population. Public support for the Raise the Age coalition has swelled this year, thanks to the global spread of the Black Lives Matter movement. The Australian Capital Territory, the region that includes Canberra, voted this week to set the age of criminal responsibility at 14. But Australia's Council of Attorneys-General, which was supposed to address the issue nationwide last month, has delayed a decision for another year, saying it has yet to come up with a workable alternative to prison for young offenders.

Fishburne's strange trips to the dairy aisle



Laurence Fishburne has very mixed feelings about stardom, said E. Alex Jung in *NYMag.com*. He began acting at 10 and spent two years as a teenager filming *Apocalypse Now* in the Philippines. When he returned to the U.S. after having worked with Marlon Brando and Francis Ford Coppola, Fishburne expected accolades—and roles that didn't come. He watched as his friends Sean Penn, Charlie Sheen, Emilio Estevez, and Rob Lowe landed leading roles in their 20s. "Of course," he says, "that immature, selfish part of me was going, 'What about [me]?' He realized it was because he was black in an industry in which starring roles for African-Americans were rare. Growing up poor in Brooklyn, Fishburne, now 59, appeared on the ABC soap *One Life to Live*, but it didn't make him popular with peers. "The kids in the neighborhood," he says, "would be like, 'Hey, movie star, how come you're dressed like a bum?'" After decades of work onstage and in film, stardom came—particularly after he played Morpheus in *The Matrix*, a role that made him a household name. "People think I am Morpheus," he sighs. "I'm not comfortable with this word star." He still finds it disconcerting when people recognize him. "They break out into these huge smiles. For years, I couldn't figure out why. I'm just walking down the street; I'm in the dairy aisle at the grocery store. You never get used to it, just as a human being."

Piccirillo's math breakthrough

Lisa Piccirillo solved a problem that had confounded mathematicians for 50 years, said John Wolfson in *The Boston Globe*. At a math conference in 2018, Piccirillo, then 27, learned about the "Conway knot," a twisted, closed circle that overlaps itself in 11 places. Mathematicians couldn't tell whether it was a "slice," meaning whether slicing through it in a 3D space would reveal an unraveled knot. A sculpture of the Conway knot adorns a gate at the University of Cambridge. But when Piccirillo learned that the knot was considered insoluble, she thought, "That's ridiculous." Piccirillo grew up in Greenwood, Maine—a town of less than 900—and got a Ph.D. in knot theory at the University of Texas. Within one week, Piccirillo proved that the Conway knot was not a slice, and showed her proof to a math professor. "He got very excited and started yelling," she says. It was published to much fanfare this year, helping Piccirillo land a tenure-track professorship at MIT. "There's this idea that mathematicians are geniuses," she says. "A lot of them seem to be child prodigies. In fact, many of the really great ones don't come from that background."



Why Bening plays her parts

Annette Bening's transgender son has led her to re-evaluate how movies are cast, said Craig Mclean in *The Telegraph* (U.K.). Bening, 62, and her husband, Warren Beatty, 83, have zealously protected their private lives since they met on the set of 1991's *Bugsy*. He and Bening have four adult children. Their eldest son, poetry editor and performer Stephen Ira, is trans. He "has expanded my worldview," Bening says, especially in regard to the debate over casting straight actors for gay or trans parts. In 2010's *The Kids Are All Right*, Bening and Julianne Moore co-starred as a lesbian couple, earning Bening her fourth Oscar nomination. Moore recently said the casting might have been a mistake, but Bening isn't so sure. "I think if I was approached to play a gay person again, I would probably approach it in the same way and think about it in the same way," she says. But for trans roles, she now thinks only someone who has lived that unique experience can depict it honestly. "I've begun to understand that sometimes people see trans people as [putting on] a sort of performance" and use that to justify non-trans actors playing trans characters. "But in fact that's a mistake. It's a misunderstanding."

In the news



■ Despite **Britney Spears'** plea to be freed of her father's control, a Los Angeles judge has extended Jamie Spears' conservatorship through January. The pop star has been under her father's court-ordered conservatorship since 2008, after she was involuntarily admitted to a psychiatric ward. A lawyer for Spears, 38, acknowledged that conservators initially "rescued her from a collapse" and "financial ruin" but argued that she has moved into a different phase of her life and no longer wishes to perform. He asked the court to have her "care manager" act as conservator and have a "corporate fiduciary," such as

a bank, oversee her estate: \$2.7 million in cash and an estimated \$57.4 million in other assets, as of Dec. 31. Her fans are rallying around the hashtag "#FreeBritney," but Jamie Spears rejected accusations that he's profiting off his daughter. "I have to report every nickel and dime spent to the court every year," he said. "How the hell would I steal something?"

■ President Trump "has no principles" and is a habitual liar who "doesn't read," his older sister, retired federal judge **Maryanne Trump Barry**, said in secretly recorded conversations with her niece Mary. "All he wants to do is appeal to his base," Barry, 83, was recorded saying in 2018. "His goddamned tweet[ing]. The lack of preparation. The lying. Holy s---." Mary Trump revealed the recordings to back up her book's claim that

Trump paid someone to take his SAT exam, an allegation she got from Barry. Trump's campaign adviser Jason Miller blamed his sister's comments on "sibling rivalry."

■ A federal judge sentenced actress **Lori Loughlin** to two months in prison and her husband, fashion designer **Mossimo Giannulli**, to five months, and angrily chastised them for bribing their daughters' way into USC. The family had a "fairy-tale life," Boston district judge Nathaniel Gorton said to Loughlin, yet they had "the inexplicable desire to grab even more." The *Full House* actress, 56, and Giannulli, 57, pleaded guilty to paying \$500,000 so that their daughters would be falsely portrayed as talented rowing recruits, even though neither competed in crew. "I will do everything in my power to redeem myself," a tearful Loughlin said.

Air travel in the coronavirus era

Passenger traffic has plunged 70 percent and airlines are losing billions. What's the future of flying?

How safe is it to fly?

Safer than you might think, for an activity that involves strangers congregating for long stretches in a cramped metal tube. “Most viruses and other germs do not spread easily on flights,” said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, citing commercial airlines’ sophisticated air filtration and circulation systems. Airplanes typically refresh their entire air volume every few minutes; recirculated air is pumped through high-efficiency filters that remove 99.97 percent of virus-size particles. The primary risk in flying is that an infected passenger could sit next to or near you and exhale, cough, or sneeze virus-laden droplets that you’d breathe in before they were filtered out. But while evidence is limited, the “data to date suggest only rare possible occurrences of in-flight transmission” of Covid-19, said Lin Chen, a Harvard Medical School professor and expert in travel medicine. When 12 infected passengers flew from the U.S. to Taiwan in March, there were no confirmed infections among the other 328 people on board. However, a recent study found that two passengers were infected by other passengers sitting across the aisle from them after a four-hour flight from Tel Aviv to Frankfurt in March. On a flight from the U.K. to Vietnam the same month, one passenger apparently spread the virus to 14 passengers and a crew member.



Evidence suggests that in-flight transmission is rare.

What safety precautions are airlines taking?

Between flights, planes are routinely sprayed with a fog of electrostatic disinfectant and otherwise sanitized. Many airlines have dialed back food and drink service to cut down on interaction between passengers and crew, and board planes from back to front to reduce passenger contact. And some have limited passenger capacity to increase distancing. Delta and JetBlue keep middle seats empty, while Southwest books flights to no more than two-thirds capacity. American and United have no such limits, though both allow passengers to rebook high-volume flights without charge, and attempt to alert passengers when flights are filling up.

What about masks?

In late April, JetBlue became the first airline to require masks; all major airlines now mandate them. In the early days there was spotty compliance, and some airlines adopted a hands-off policy to avoid confrontations, instructing flight attendants not to challenge maskless passengers. But they’ve since cracked down, with American and Southwest ending medical exemptions. Maskless passengers have been removed from flights in some cases, and many have been placed on no-

fly lists. (That’s what happened last week to Robert O’Neill, the Navy SEAL who killed Osama bin Laden, after he refused to mask up on a Delta flight.) Flight attendant and pilot unions have asked for a blanket federal rule requiring masks on flights. “[We] need the backing of the government and clear consequences for those who don’t comply,” said Sara Nelson, president of the Association of Flight Attendants. But the airlines have opposed a federal mask mandate, saying their own rules are adequate and they don’t want the industry to be singled out.

How big a hit has the industry taken?

A huge one. In April, passenger traffic cratered to around 4 percent of the usual number; since then it’s revived somewhat, but it’s still running about 70 percent below pre-pandemic levels. The financial fallout has been massive. The four largest U.S. airlines lost a combined \$10 billion from April through June; this year, U.S. carriers are expected to lose \$84 billion, which would make it the worst year in aviation history. And with steep infection rates across much of the U.S. and surveys showing many Americans are wary of flying, there’s no recovery in sight. U.S. airlines received a \$25 billion bailout through the Cares Act; as part of the deal they can’t lay off staff until Oct. 1. They’ve scaled back the workforce through buyouts and early retirements but have given notice that without another bailout, mass layoffs are in store this fall. United said it could furlough 36,000 employees, nearly half its U.S. workforce; American says 25,000 of its workers may face layoffs.

What’s the long-term outlook?

Nobody expects a quick turnaround. After 9/11, ridership was depressed for years and airlines didn’t become profitable again until 2007. Industry officials do not anticipate a full recovery until 2024, and some believe passenger volume may never return to pre-pandemic heights. “It’s going to be a slower and more uneven recovery than one might have expected,” said Standard & Poor’s analyst Philip Baggaley. Business travel, which has provided airlines with a large percentage of their profits, may never fully bounce back now that videoconferencing has become standard. What the industry will look like by the time the pandemic is over is very unclear. Some major airlines could go under, and some analysts predict mergers and takeovers. “Airlines are going to fall by the wayside,” said industry analyst John Strickland. “I feel sadly sure that aviation is going to be much smaller.”

What passengers can expect

In future years, airline passengers can expect new safety measures when they arrive at the airport. Some airports are testing thermal screeners to detect people with fevers, and industry experts say there may also be advanced health screenings that measure heart rates and blood-oxygen levels. Facial recognition technology—already in the works—may cut down on the need for interacting with touchscreens and airport personnel. Planes may be outfitted with protective shields or staggered seating arrangements; ultraviolet wands and antimicrobial surfaces may be utilized to kill viruses. On the price front, expect depressed fares in the short term to lure passengers back, but higher ones in the long run as airlines try to recoup losses; an analysis by the Dollar Flight Club predicts fares will double between 2021 and 2025. Seats may get even closer together, and fees may continue to rise. When food and drinks return, they could carry steep charges, and some expect baggage fees to spike. Throw a long-lasting decline in international travel into the mix, said David Fickling in *Bloomberg.com*, and “the industry that emerges from coronavirus will be nasty, brutish, and short-haul.”

Don't make a vaccine mandatory

Jim Geraghty
NationalReview.com

The surest way to create fear and resistance to a coronavirus vaccine, said Jim Geraghty, is to make getting it mandatory. That's what Virginia Commissioner of Health Dr. Norman Oliver said last week he plans to do, if and when a vaccine becomes available, under state law that can be invoked in a public health crisis. I personally believe the Food and Drug Administration and other authorities will not approve a vaccine before it is carefully tested for effectiveness and possible side effects. Still, "it's not surprising that people would be at least a little wary about a new vaccine that will be the fastest-developed one in human history." These skeptics will be not reassured if they're told that a "giant pharmaceutical company" says it's safe, and government bureaucrats demand they line up for a shot. It would be far wiser and more effective to engage in "a campaign of public persuasion," and let those eager to be vaccinated go first. Their experience and testimonials will be powerful endorsements during the many months in which the country is producing enough vaccine doses to immunize anyone who wants one. So why coerce people? "We've got enough public paranoia out there already."

QAnon gets Trump's endorsement

Jonathan Zimmerman
USA Today

QAnon's inroads into the Republican mainstream got a big boost last week, said Jonathan Zimmerman. President Trump gave the nutty conspiracy theory his imprimatur, saying that QAnon followers are patriots who "love our country" and, most importantly, "like me very much." When a reporter pointed out to Trump that QAnon followers believe Trump and a mysterious figure called "Q" are secretly saving the world from a satanic, "deep state" cabal of pedophiles who eat children, Trump responded, "Is that supposed to be a bad thing? If I can help save the world from problems, I'm willing to do it." QAnon followers, who number in the millions on Facebook, no doubt were thrilled by their leader's endorsement. But is this "the future Republicans want?" Back in the early 1960s, conservative journalist William F. Buckley urged Republicans to distance themselves from the extremist nuts of that era, the John Birch Society, who insisted much of the U.S. government was "communist controlled." Presidential candidate Sen. Barry Goldwater refused to fully disown the Birchers, which helped Democrats portray Goldwater as a dangerous, far-right extremist. He lost in a landslide. It's not only "cowardly and dishonest" for Trump and Republicans to play footsie with QAnon, it's "bad politics," too.

Why I prefer to vote in person

Jeff Jacoby
The Boston Globe

"I don't fault anyone who chooses to submit a ballot through the post office," said Jeff Jacoby, but this Election Day, I'm casting mine in person. First of all, "I don't want to risk my ballot being lost or rejected." In every election, mailed ballots are more likely not to be counted, either because of problems with the mail itself or because election officials disqualify them on the grounds that signatures don't match or some other detail is wrong. With tens of millions of additional votes coming via mail this November, I don't want my vote to be among those disqualified. Fear of the coronavirus won't keep me from the polls, which have plexiglass shields installed between voters and poll workers and spaced-out voting machines. With hand sanitizer and masks, voting is relatively safe. I also am still moved by the "communitarian spirit of voting together" on Election Day. Seeing your neighbors at the polls, all of us equal in casting one vote, "is a stirring reinforcement" of democracy itself. As usual, I'm not happy with the choices on the ballot, but I'm going to vote in person this year, "and to hope, as ever, for the best."

Viewpoint

"You say New York will not bounce back this time. You think Rome is going away, too? London? Tokyo? Real, live, inspiring human energy exists when we coagulate together in crazy places like New York City. Energy, attitude, and personality cannot be 'remoted' through even the best fiber-optic lines. That's the whole reason many of us moved to New York in the first place. This stupid virus will give up eventually. We're going to keep going with New York City if that's all right with you. And it will sure as hell be back."

Comedian Jerry Seinfeld in *The New York Times*

It must be true... I read it in the tabloids

■ A piece of Lego finally fell out of a boy's nose—two years after he pushed it up there. New Zealander Sameer Anwar, 7, inserted the tiny piece into his nostril in 2018, but neither his parents nor his doctor could find it, and the incident was forgotten. "Since then he's never complained or anything," his father said. But last week Sameer felt some pain, blew his nose, and the piece shot out. "Mum, I found the Lego!" he said. "You were telling me it wasn't there, but it was!"

■ A Mississippi man who had proposed a state flag featuring a mosquito briefly enjoyed a moment of triumph before officials said he had only advanced to the second round because of a typo. Thomas Rosete submitted one of 3,000 proposals to replace the former flag featuring the Confederate battle emblem with one showing a mosquito in the center of a circle of stars on a red-and-white background, in recognition of the insect's pervasive, annoying presence in the state. Rosete said he believes that "people from all backgrounds can get behind" his flag because, as he put it, "The mosquitoes, it's their state. We're just living in it."



■ A Swiss town got an overnight dusting of "chocolate snow" after a malfunction at a chocolate factory. Children in the town of Olten awoke to find a Willy Wonka-esque "chocolate wonderland," with everything from roads to roofs to cars covered with a fine layer of the dust produced when cocoa beans are crushed in preparation for making candy. Officials with the Lindt & Sprüngli company blamed the issue on a problem with the factory's cooling ventilation system, but on social media, residents expressed delight at the flavorful snow. "My dream come true," said one.

SACRED STONE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION



Centuries ago, Persians, Tibetans and Mayans considered turquoise a gemstone of the heavens, believing the striking blue stones were sacred pieces of sky. Today, the rarest and most valuable turquoise is found in the American Southwest—but the future of the blue beauty is unclear.

On a recent trip to Tucson, we spoke with fourth generation turquoise traders who explained that less than five percent of turquoise mined worldwide can be set into jewelry and only about twenty mines in the Southwest supply gem-quality turquoise. Once a thriving industry, many Southwest mines have run dry and are now closed.

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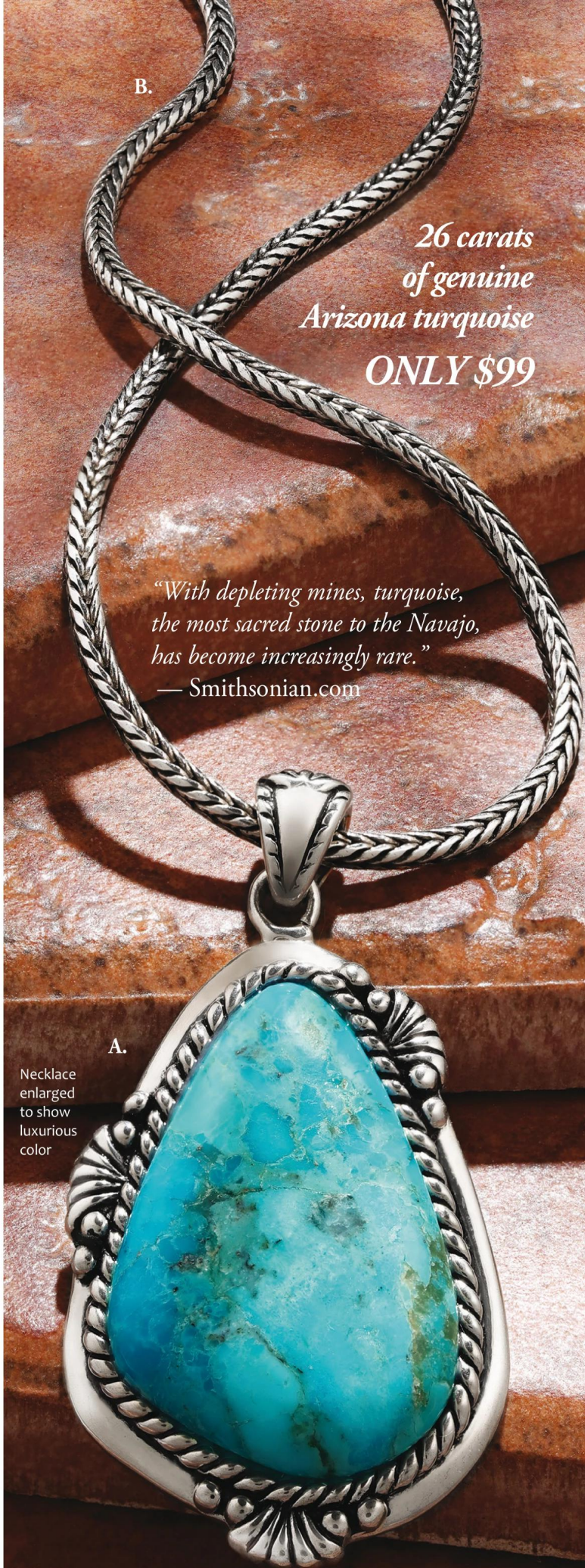
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ITALY

Cutting off the bank of mom and dad

Daniela Missaglia
Panorama

“Farewell, big babies,” said Daniela Missaglia. Italy’s tradition of allowing grown adults to free-load off their parents has just been torpedoed. The Supreme Court ruled last week in favor of a divorced father who complained that he was still paying child support for his 35-year-old son. The son had finished his studies and was working part-time as a music teacher, earning too little to live on his own. Of course, most of us as children dream of “becoming dancers, footballers, singers, musicians, painters, artists, or even writers or philosophers.” But unless we are among the lucky few who can pay rent and feed our families with

our talents alone, when we grow up we realize we must “roll up our sleeves” and choose another path. Some 67 percent of Italians ages 18 to 34 still live with parents. Do these “spoiled, coddled, hyperprotected kids” realize what previous generations sacrificed? Italians of decades past fought wars, “rebuilt a destroyed country, emigrated from their homeland,” and headed off to labor as guest workers in foreign coal mines. They didn’t have the luxury of following their muse. Let this court ruling be a turning point. “In short, dear boy who has become a man, look for a job—even if it is not the one of your dreams.”

SWEDEN

TikTok lures kids to exploitation

Pernilla Ericson
Aftonbladet

U.S. President Donald Trump may be trying to shut down TikTok as a way to punish China, said Pernilla Ericson, but in Sweden we have other reasons to be alarmed at the influence of this viral video-sharing app. Gabriella Kärnekull Wolfe, an activist for those exploited in the sex trade, says TikTok is bombarding its young female users with what amount to ads for Onlyfans, a pornographic site where users pay for access to videos, photos, and private messages from women who strip or perform sex acts on camera. These are not commercial ads run by Onlyfans; instead, they are TikTok videos uploaded by teenagers who say they are earning

thousands of dollars a day posing for viewers. “The comment fields are filled with young girls who ping their friends and write that they just have to join Onlyfans.” Of course, Swedes are nearly united in believing that it’s perfectly fine for adult women to make money by undressing and chatting with strangers. But young teenagers can quickly get lured in way over their heads. A single topless selfie or video can be used by a stranger as blackmail—I know who you are; I’ll tell your parents—and girls can be “pressured to show more, do more” until they are in an abusive situation. For too many children, TikTok is a gateway to a dangerous future.

How they see us: A deepening rift over Iran sanctions

The Trump administration is treating its international allies like its enemies, said Carrie Nooten in *Le Monde* (France). After the United Nations Security Council last week rejected a U.S. proposal to indefinitely extend an arms embargo on Iran, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo declared that France, Germany, and the U.K.—all of which abstained from the vote—had decided “to side with the ayatollahs.” It was an outrageous claim. The three European powers had spent months trying to get the U.S. to agree to a limited extension of the embargo—which prohibits Iran from buying and selling tanks, fighter jets, and other conventional weapons, and is due to expire in October—because they knew Russia and China would veto the U.S.’s harsher version in the Security Council. The Europeans suspect the U.S. wanted its arms embargo measure to fail so it could reimpose all the sanctions lifted by the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, not just on arms but also on oil sales and banking agreements. “U.S. diplomatic isolation is the main outcome of this chaotic process.”

The Trump administration can’t reimpose sanctions, because it pulled out of the Iran nuclear deal in 2018, said Maurin Picard in *Le Figaro* (France). The Obama-era agreement, signed by the three European powers plus the U.S., Russia, and China, lifted some sanctions on Iran immediately and set an end date for others—including the conventional-weapons ban—in exchange for Iran’s curtailment of its nuclear weapons program. The U.N. Security Council resolution that endorsed the deal stated



Pompeo: European allies sided ‘with the ayatollahs.’

that any signatory could “snapback” those sanctions if Iran violated the deal. Pompeo is now trying to activate that provision, even though the U.S. is no longer a party to the agreement. Pompeo claims absurdly that when it comes to Iran, “America will not appease, America will lead.” Does he not understand “that the post-Cold War Pax Americana is dead and buried,” killed by an isolationist Trump administration?

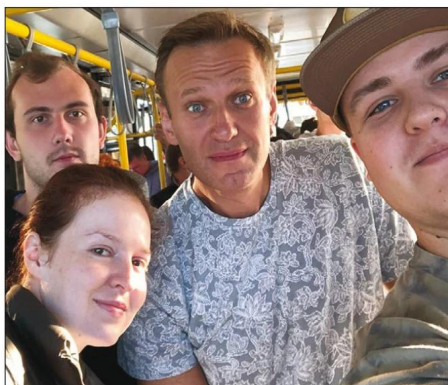
It’s astonishing how little support the U.S. has been able to muster, said Borzou Daragahi in *Independent.co*

.uk. Of the 14 other members of the Security Council, only the Dominican Republic—a temporary member “with zero stake in the security architecture of the Middle East”—voted in favor of the indefinite arms embargo. This fiasco has exposed the desperation of the Iran hawks in the Trump administration. Faced with the prospect of a Trump defeat in the November election, they’re attempting “to sabotage” the nuclear deal so thoroughly that a President Joe Biden will find it impossible to normalize diplomatic relations with Tehran. In his attempt to destroy the Iran agreement, Trump is instead destroying the credibility of the U.N. Security Council, said Carsten Luther in *Die Zeit* (Germany). The other members of the council will “simply ignore” the U.S. attempt to snapback sanctions. “Absurd debates and proposals are now likely,” along with dueling vetoes and “new threats and sanctions against states that should actually be partners.”

Russia: Who poisoned Kremlin critic Navalny?

Like so many before him, Russia's foremost Kremlin critic has been poisoned, said Yulia Latynina in *Novaya Gazeta* (Russia). Anti-corruption activist Alexei Navalny was flying home to Moscow last week from Siberia—where he'd been campaigning for opposition politicians—when he fell agonizingly ill and passed out. The plane made an emergency landing in Omsk and Navalny was rushed to a hospital, where for two days doctors refused to allow his wife or his physician to see him and blocked the activist from being airlifted to Germany. Believing traces of the poison had dropped to undetectable levels, Russian authorities finally allowed Navalny, 44, to be flown to a Berlin hospital. There, German doctors determined he had likely been poisoned with a cholinesterase inhibitor, found in pesticides and nerve agents such as sarin. He remains in a medically induced coma. German Chancellor Angela Merkel declared Navalny her “personal guest” and stationed police and federal agents at the hospital—a needless precaution, given that had the Russians wanted to kill Navalny, they would have “finished him off in Omsk”—but still a strong statement from the West.

The Kremlin has a long history of dosing its enemies with toxins, said Christoph von Marschall in *Der Tagesspiegel* (Germany). Some of them survived: Viktor Yushchenko, the leader of Ukraine's Orange Revolution, who was disfigured by dioxin in 2004; Russian dissident Vladimir Kara-Murza, who suffered organ failure in 2015 and 2017; former double agent Sergei Skripal, who was dosed with Novichok in England in 2018; and Navalny himself, who experienced poisoning-like symptoms in Russian custody



Navalny, center, before the poisoning

last year. Others died, including former intelligence agent Alexander Litvinenko, who was poisoned with polonium in London in 2006. There's no hard evidence that the regime of Russian President Vladimir Putin did any of this—but “how long can we pretend to be blind and deaf without becoming an accomplice?” How predictable of the West to blame “the damned Kremlin,” said Pavel Smolyak in *RT.com* (Russia). They always howl poison with no proof, and now they have Navalny surrounded by guards, a “hostage.” Navalny is “not a person to them,” but “a card to be played against Putin.”

Navalny's threat to the Kremlin lies in his “unorthodox, but highly effective, brand of investigative journalism,” said Ilya Lozovsky in *OCCRP.org* (Bosnia and Herzegovina). A lawyer by training, he started blogging in 2008, and his slickly produced videos have exposed “the corruption at the heart of the Putin regime.” Using “drone footage, high-quality animations, and wry humor,” Navalny traces the complex finances of oligarchs and top officials to reveal how they loot the state and launder their money. Some tie his poisoning to the democratic uprising in Belarus, said Tatiana Vasilchuk in *Novaya Gazeta*. If Belarusians can revolt against dictator Alexander Lukashenko, perhaps Russians could follow suit. “Russia has also been in a fever for a long time,” says opposition politician Dmitry Gudkov, with periodic anti-Putin demonstrations in Moscow and mass protests now occurring in the country's far east. Navalny would be an obvious leader if those protests spread, which is why authorities want him silenced.

WEST BANK

Annexation in all but name

Ramzy Baroud
The Jordan Times

Israel claims that its new diplomatic deal with the United Arab Emirates has put the planned annexation of the West Bank on hold, said Ramzy Baroud. But a ruthless “de facto annexation has been taking place for many years.” More than half of the West Bank was designated under the 1995 Oslo Accords as Area C, “rich with resources—mostly arable land, water, and ample minerals—yet relatively sparsely populated.” Israel wants that territory and is using every trick to take control. Authorities refuse Palestinians permits to build houses as their population expands, then say that existing Palestinian houses are illegal and must be destroyed.

Many young families have been forced to live in caves—but now they may lose even those makeshift shelters. In the mountain village of Farasin, home to some 200 Palestinians, 36 properties have been marked for demolition. “This is the onset of ethnic cleansing” of the entire village. Ahmed Amarneh, who lives in a cave with his family, was among those who received a demolition order. “I don't understand how they can prevent me from living in a cave,” he says. “Animals live in caves and are not thrown out.” Are Palestinians to be denied housing and also the right to shelter? “When the cave is demolished, where else can the Amarneh family go?”

INDIA

Coding instead of crayoning

G. Sampath
The Hindu

My son is 4 years old, said G. Sampath, but apparently he is already falling behind in the highly competitive world of Indian overachievers. A friend of mine told me this week about BlueShift, a site that offers online coding classes for kids ages 4 to 15. I have now learned “what every Indian parent other than me already seemed to know: A child old enough to walk is old enough to code.” We all want our kids to become the next Sundar Pichai, the Indian-American CEO of Google, don't we? Well, the best way to boost them along that road is to ensure that, in addition to being fluent in English and Hindi, they also

master “a motherboard tongue or two.” I guess the ultimate goal is to get kids to launch their own apps and become billionaires by age 10. At that point, with financial security for the whole family set, maybe a kid could “enjoy a normal childhood, and learn at his own pace without worrying about exams, grades, college admissions, or job prospects.” Until then, though, we are all supposed to drive our youngsters just as hard as we can and make sure they don't waste any computer time on crayons or blocks. If anyone knows of a “startup accelerator program for nursery kidtrepreneurs, do drop me a mail.”

Noted

■ More than 550,000 absentee ballots cast in this year's presidential primaries have been rejected by state election boards, far more than the roughly 318,000 ballots rejected in the 2016 general election. The most common reasons for rejection are late arrivals, signatures that are missing or don't match those on file, and errors in marking the chosen candidate. If there are similar numbers of ballot rejections in November, it could be enough to swing some state results.

NPR.org

■ One in five working-age adults is jobless because the pandemic disrupted their child care, according to research from the Census Bureau and the Federal Reserve. Women are nearly three times as likely as men to have left jobs to tend to children not attending school or day care.

CNN.com



■ Sales of existing homes jumped 25 percent in July, marking the biggest monthly gain ever. Industry experts attribute the boost to the pandemic, with many Americans seeking more spacious homes, fleeing cities, or moving closer to family.

The Wall Street Journal

■ The U.S. abortion rate is lower than it was in 1973, when the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion in every state. There were 13.5 abortions per 1,000 women ages 15 to 44 in 2017, the last year for which statistics are available, compared with 16.3 in 1973, and 29.3 in 1982, when abortions peaked.

TheDispatch.com

Bannon: Another right-wing grift

President Trump's former chief strategist Steve Bannon has been charged with a "quintessentially Trumpian" plot, said *The New York Times* in an editorial. Federal prosecutors say Bannon, Air Force veteran Brian Kolfage, and two others convinced 250,000-plus people to donate a total of \$25 million to "We Build the Wall," a supposed nonprofit that claimed it would use the money to construct 100 miles of barrier along the U.S.'s southwestern border. Bannon—arrested on a Chinese billionaire's yacht off the Connecticut coast—siphoned off more than \$1 million for personal expenses after promising to "not take a penny in salary," the federal indictment charges. President Trump said he knew nothing about the project, but the group's general counsel, Kris Kobach, claimed Trump told him the organizers "have my blessing."

It can be very hard to discern where Trumpism ends "and the financial scam begins," said David French in *TheDispatch.com*. Bannon and his partners launched their charity in December 2018, after "weeks of fearmongering" from President Trump and Fox News about immigrant caravans approaching the U.S. from Central America. They hysterically claimed the caravans were



After his arrest: Will Bannon cop a plea?

packed with gang members, terrorists, and filthy migrants bringing diseases such as polio and leprosy. In their first week alone, Bannon and his co-conspirators raised \$17 million. The indictment of this former top Trump aide is "very bad news" for others in Trumpworld, said Elie Honig in *CNN.com*. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the

Southern District of New York says it has phony invoices and forged receipts the defendants used to funnel money to themselves. Bannon is facing seven to nine years in prison, and if he wants to cop a plea, the SDNY will insist he detail every crime of which he has knowledge.

Bannon is typical of the "con men" who have milked the conservative movement for decades, said Paul Waldman in *The Washington Post*. These grifters "have always viewed the Right's rank and file with utter contempt, as little more than a collection of fools to be taken advantage of." Stoking fear and false hopes, the swindlers sell "miracle biblical cancer cures" or raise money for "scam PACs" that make guys like Bannon even richer. How fitting that the big grift "reached its apogee" under the man who gave us the Trump Foundation and Trump University—the greatest con man of all.

Gun violence: Why is it rising?

America is experiencing "an exceedingly bloody summer," said John Eligon in *The New York Times*. While both total crime and overall violent crime are down nationwide, shootings have become an "all-too-familiar" occurrence. Homicides were up 37 percent from May to June in 20 large U.S. cities, according to Richard Rosenfeld, a criminologist at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. In New York City, the murder rate is up 30 percent over 2019; Chicago just saw its bloodiest month in 28 years, with 106 people shot and 14 killed over a single weekend; and Kansas City is on pace to shatter its record of 153 homicides. "We're surrounded by murder," said Erica Mosby, whose 20-year-old pregnant niece was recently killed in a random Kansas City shooting while she pushed a stroller. "It's terrible."

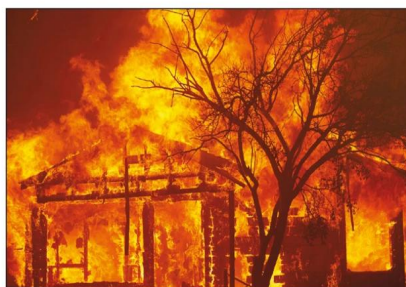
Criminologists have a number of theories to explain this spike, said German Lopez in *Vox.com*. The pandemic brought a sharp increase in gun sales, and then Black Lives Matter protests may have led police to pull back from patrols and arrests, sparking frustrated citizens to take matters into their own hands. That's also what happened in some cities in 2014 after the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., with

officers fearing that "any act of aggressive policing could get them in trouble." Fluctuations in crime rates "are notoriously difficult to explain," said Spencer Bokart-Lindell in *The New York Times*. This summer's gun-violence spike comes on the heels of an equally inexplicable three-decade-long downward trend in U.S. violent crime. That said, murder rates typically tick up in the summer; gun sales exploded from March to June, and the senseless nature of much of the violence has analysts wondering if the pandemic's frayed nerves and economic havoc are playing a major role.

It's probably a "confluence of forces," said Jon Hilsenrath in *The Wall Street Journal*. Our streets were "emptied of eyes and ears" by lockdowns and fears of infection, while gangs and other criminals were emboldened by the partial closure of courts and release of some offenders from jails. President Trump blames weak Democratic mayors, but surges in gun violence are also being seen in cities run by Republicans, such as Tulsa and San Diego. Is the long-term decline in violent crime now reversing, or will this summer be an aberration? No one knows, "but a great deal hangs on that question."

Wildfires: California's hellish new reality

"The future of climate change" looks like California, said **David Callaway** in *USA Today*. "An apocalyptic combination" of brutal heat and nearly 12,000 lightning strikes—many in "dry thunderstorms" without rain—ignited more than 600 wildfires last week, including the second- and third-worst in state history. They've torched



An incinerated home in Vacaville

1.2 million acres, an area larger than Rhode Island, threatening precious Northern California forests and Napa and Sonoma's wine country while forcing more than 170,000 residents to evacuate. Seven people have died, and millions of people breathing smoky air could be more vulnerable to respiratory infections such as Covid-19. "To add to the chaos," temperatures soared above 100 degrees, and energy regulators imposed rolling blackouts as demand for air-conditioning overtaxed the grid. This is what the coming climate disaster will bring: fire, droughts, floods, and hurricanes; "finger-pointing"; mass evacuations; and millions of "angry people."

The pandemic has made this disaster even worse, said **Rebecca Onion** in *Slate.com*. Shelters for evacuees are notoriously "bad places for infectious diseases": Hundreds of Californians contracted norovirus in evacuation centers during 2018's Camp Fire. It's been a logistical nightmare

to set up sanitized, socially distanced shelters while also providing virus protection for 14,000 firefighters, plus the inmate crews California depends on. And because the state released many inmates during coronavirus outbreaks in prisons this spring, just 90 of the 192 inmate fire teams are currently available.

Wildfires and pandemics have much in common, said **Stephen Pyne** in the *Los Angeles Times*. Both are caused by a combination of natural forces and human failure to respond strategically. Californians must "relearn how to coexist" with wildfires, because they're never "going away."

"California is Australia now," said **David Wallace-Wells** in *NYMag.com*. Last year, the Land Down Under suffered what's now known as Black Summer, when bushfires burned 72,000 square miles, killing billions of animals and "flooding Sydney with air so thick with smoke, ferries couldn't navigate its harbor." California's fires this week aren't "quite as grim," but they could be next time. The state's perennial hellscape should provide a warning about our new climate reality. As rampaging wildfires, extreme weather, and punishing storms become more and more common in the years to come, scenes of "unfolding terror" will haunt Americans and all of humanity.

FDA: Surrendering to Trump's pressure

The Food and Drug Administration "just had the worst day in its history," said **Michael Hiltzik** in the *Los Angeles Times*. On Monday, FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn announced the agency was granting emergency approval of treating Covid-19 with convalescent plasma—a treatment scientists say has not been proved effective. The announcement followed strong pressure from President Trump, who last weekend issued a tweet attacking "the deep state, or whoever, over at the FDA" for delaying treatment and vaccine approvals so as to hurt him politically. White House health adviser Anthony Fauci and other top government doctors reportedly urged the FDA not to green-light the unproven therapy. But Hahn was "beaten into political sycophancy" and reduced to echoing Trump's wild claims that plasma treatments lower mortality by 35 percent—a tenfold exaggeration of questionable data that left "medical experts aghast." Hahn later admitted his numbers were wrong, but "severe" damage had already been inflicted on the agency's credibility.

The therapy in question has been used for more than a century to fight various diseases, said **Amy Dockser Marcus** in *The Wall Street Journal*. It involves taking blood plasma from recovered

patients—which holds Covid-19 antibodies—and infusing it into sick patients' blood. An analysis of 71,000 patients who received the treatment at the Mayo Clinic suggests it had some effectiveness in cutting mortality among those who got it within days of being diagnosed. But to trumpet this slim evidence as a game changer "is the very definition of cherry-picking," said physician **Jeremy Samuel Faust** in *WashingtonPost.com*. What's sorely needed before doctors start administering potentially plasma therapy—which can cause dangerous immune reactions—are large randomized trials in which it is measured against a placebo treatment. Without such gold-standard trials, "there's no solid proof" it works.

Trump has "made that impossible," said **Arthur Caplan** in *StatNews.com*. Now that he's strong-armed the FDA into approving the treatment, and called it a cure, "no trials will get funded or enrolled." Sick patients will clamor for convalescent plasma, and doctors will fight over limited supplies without knowing "if it works, for whom, and how best to use it." This sends up a red flag for the fall. If Trump "needs an October surprise to salvage his political future," who doubts he'd try to rush through an unproven vaccine?

Wit & Wisdom

"Always predict the worst, and you'll be hailed as a prophet."

Musical satirist Tom Lehrer, quoted in Vice.com

"Let my name stand among those who are willing to bear ridicule and reproach for the truth's sake, and so earn some right to rejoice when the victory is won."

Louisa May Alcott, quoted in The New York Times

"Love is a lot like a backache. It doesn't show on X-rays, but you know it's there."

George Burns, quoted in BuzzFeed.com

"Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of overcoming it."

Helen Keller, quoted in Parade

"It is not right for a ruler who has the nation in his charge, a man with so much on his mind, to sleep all night."

Homer, quoted in Lapham's Quarterly

"The safest road to Hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts."

C.S. Lewis, quoted in ArtsJournal.com

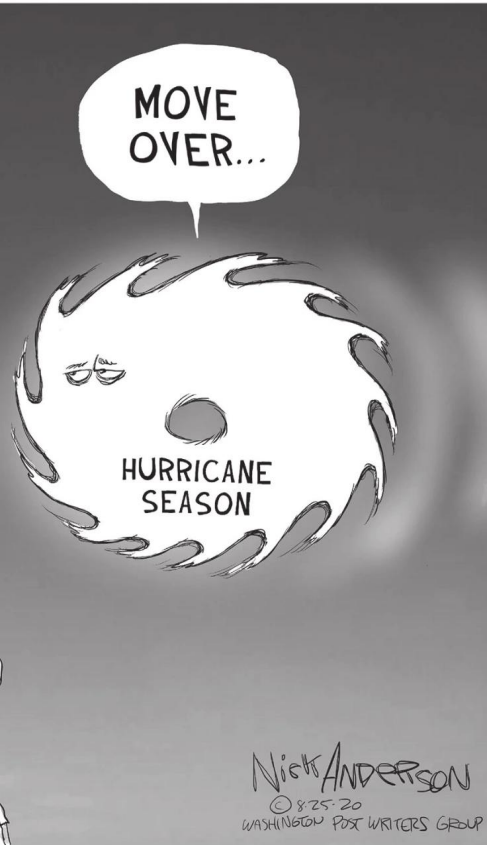
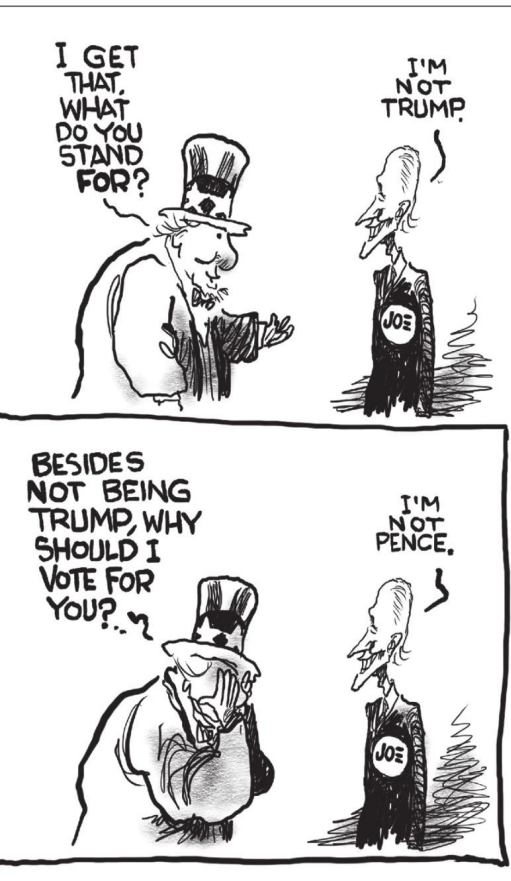
"I generally avoid temptation unless I can't resist it."

Mae West, quoted in GoodReads.com

Poll watch

■ Joe Biden is far less disliked by independent voters than Hillary Clinton was in 2016. **31%** see Biden unfavorably compared with **51%** who viewed Clinton unfavorably. Biden leads President Trump among likely voters, **51%** to **43%**. Morning Consult

■ **88%** of Democrats and **60%** of Republicans say the Postal Service should receive more funding to ensure timely delivery. Reuters/Ipsos



Markets: Can the Big Tech rally last?

Are we in the middle of another dot-com bubble? asked **Robert Cyran** in *Breaking Views.com*. “The pandemic has accelerated shifts to online activities and automation,” and American tech behemoths such as Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, and Google are racking up record valuations. A handful of Big Tech firms now “account for 31 percent of the \$33 trillion equity market capitalization of the 1,000 biggest companies in the U.S.,” and analysts expect those same giants to deliver “about a quarter of S&P 500 profit this year.” Such a concentration of value in such a small number of firms has some market watchers worried that investors are “placing a lot of eggs in precious few baskets.” But the current tech rally “can’t be dismissed as easily as the one two decades ago.” In 1999, Cisco Systems was trading at 190 times its historic earnings—an absurd valuation. Over the past year, though, Google, Apple, Facebook, and Microsoft have traded at 30 to 40 times their earnings.

Investors are confident that nothing will stop Apple’s phenomenal growth, said **Dan Gallagher** in *The Wall Street Journal*. The tech colossus last week became the first U.S. company to notch a \$2 trillion valuation. The market is ignoring the fact that Apple is “facing an unprecedented challenge to its App Store.” Lawmakers and regulators on both sides of the Atlantic are poking

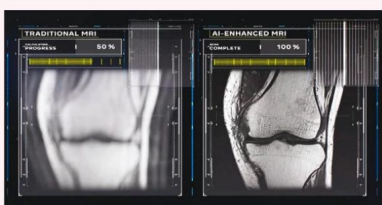


Made by a \$2 trillion business

around that crucial business. And the App Store is at the heart of a new lawsuit by Epic Games, maker of *Fortnite*, which accuses Apple of violating antitrust laws by forcing developers to use its in-app payment system. Without Apple and five of its Big Tech cohorts, the S&P 500 would actually be down 4 percent this year, said **David Lynch** in *The Washington Post*. The outsized role played by those giants “creates risks for individuals trying to save for retirement” with a market-tracking index fund. If the tech giants trip up, the rest of the S&P could tumble.

But there’s a reason Big Tech firms have “trounced the market,” said **Nicholas Jasinski** in *Barrons.com*. Their earnings have remained solidly positive during the pandemic while the rest of the economy has contracted. They also have plenty of cash on their balance sheets, so “they can withstand shocks.” For all this attention on the big guys, the market’s top 10 performers since spring are mostly little-known tech firms, said **Matthew Winkler** in *Bloomberg.com*. Twilio (up 180 percent) creates voice and video communication tools for companies like Uber and WhatsApp. CrowdStrike (94 percent) uses “artificial intelligence algorithms” to thwart cybercrimes. Datadog (129 percent) provides cloud-monitoring tools. What do these “big winners” have in common? They’re “nourishing the roots of remotely engaged commerce.”

Innovation of the week



Researchers at Facebook and New York University have found a way to generate MRI scans four times faster without any loss of diagnostic accuracy, said **Jeremy Kahn** in *Fortune.com*. The scientists fed an artificial intelligence model pairs of low-resolution and high-resolution magnetic resonance imaging scans, training the AI to “connect the dots” on scans generated using just a quarter of the usual input data. MRI scans often take more than 30 minutes, and patients are required to remain still for the duration. Children—who tend to wriggle around in the tube—are often sedated to help doctors capture high-quality images. By reducing the scanning time to mere minutes, the AI could make it easier to use MRIs on young patients and those suffering acute conditions such as strokes, “in which time is critical.”

Bytes: What’s new in tech

Facebook curbs QAnon

Facebook has deleted more than 790 groups, 100 pages, and 1,500 ads affiliated with the conspiracy theory QAnon, said **Elizabeth Dwoskin** and **Isaac Stanley-Becker** in *The Washington Post*. The crackdown comes amid growing pressure on the social media platform to combat misinformation and “groups that incite violence or threaten others.” QAnon, whose adherents believe President Trump is secretly battling a cabal of “deep state” Satanists and pedophiles, “has been identified by the FBI as a potential domestic terrorism threat.” Facebook said it will no longer recommend QAnon-affiliated accounts and pages to users, will prohibit the groups from placing ads and selling products, and will shut down pages that discuss potential violence. But the social media network “stopped short of an outright ban” on activity related to the conspiracy theory.

Secret Service surveillance

The Secret Service has been buying location data harvested from popular smartphone apps—data the agency would “ordinarily need a warrant or court order to obtain,” said **Joseph Cox** in *Vice.com*. Documents show that in 2017, the Secret Service bought a product called Locate X from Virginia-based social

media surveillance company Babel Street. Locate X can track a cellphone’s movements using supposedly anonymized location data collected and sold by weather, game, and map apps. Law enforcement agencies must get a warrant to “compel a company to provide location data,” but there is nothing that bars an agency from “simply buying the data instead.”

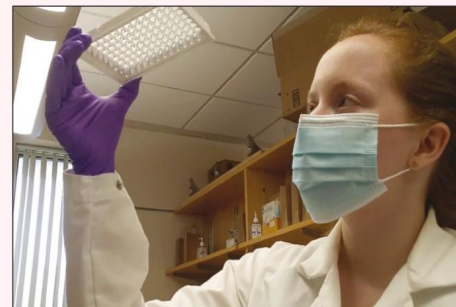
RIP Internet Explorer

After 25 years, Microsoft is finally killing Internet Explorer, said **David Goldman** in *CNN.com*. The company announced last week that it will stop supporting Internet Explorer 11—the most recent iteration of the browser—in August 2021. “Once the most-used web browser, Internet Explorer had been on a steady downward trajectory for years.” After debuting as part of Windows 95, Internet Explorer enjoyed “a virtual monopoly,” commanding 95 percent of the browser market at its 2002 peak. “But Microsoft failed to innovate,” and as Internet Explorer became “synonymous with bugs and security problems,” web users flocked to rival browsers such as Google’s Chrome and Mozilla’s Firefox. To this day, Internet Explorer does not support extensions and isn’t available on non-Windows platforms.

‘Groundbreaking’ saliva test approved

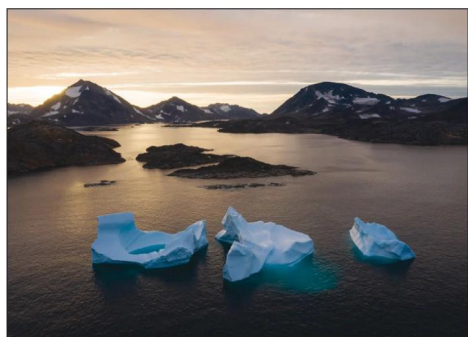
The Food and Drug Administration has given emergency approval to a new saliva-based Covid-19 test, potentially providing the country with a fast and cheap way to diagnose the disease. Unlike existing tests, SalivaDirect doesn’t require nasal swabs or specialized chemical reagents that have become scarce in the pandemic. Instead, those taking the \$10 saliva test—developed by researchers at Yale University—simply spit into a sterile container. SalivaDirect can produce results in under three hours with accuracy on a par with nasal swabbing, reports *CNN.com*, and should be on the market in the coming weeks. Spit samples

still need to be analyzed at a laboratory. But because SalivaDirect does not require any proprietary equipment, a wide variety of labs should be able to scale up the testing method quickly. “Providing this type of flexibility for processing saliva samples to test for Covid-19 infection is groundbreaking,” says FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn. SalivaDirect could help overwhelmed labs meet the surging demand for tests. Many Americans are still having to wait days or even weeks to get their results. And the longer an infected person has to wait to be diagnosed, the more likely he or she is to spread the disease



Working on the spit test at Yale

to other people. “If cheap alternatives like SalivaDirect can be implemented across the country,” says Nathan Grubaugh, from Yale, “we may finally get a handle on this pandemic, even before a vaccine.”



Losing 300 billion tons of ice a year

Greenland at point of no return

So much ice has melted from Greenland’s glaciers that even if global warming were to stop today, the island’s ice sheet would keep on disintegrating. That’s the conclusion of a new study that examined 34 years of satellite data on 234 glaciers across Greenland, reports *USA Today*. The island’s ice sheet dumps more than 300 billion tons of melting ice into the ocean every year, making it the single-biggest contributor to global sea level rise. Researchers say the rate of collapse, which has increased at least sevenfold over the past two decades, is now so drastic that the snowfall that typically replenishes the glaciers can no longer keep up with the rate of melting from parts of the ice sheet newly exposed to warmer ocean water—even if humanity somehow managed to reverse climate change. “Glacier retreat has knocked the dynamics of the whole ice sheet into a constant state of loss,” says study co-author Ian Howat, from Ohio State University. Greenland’s disappearing ice sheet is a problem for all of humanity: Sea levels are expected to rise by more than 3 feet by 2100, swamping many coastal communities.

Close to herd immunity?

A growing number of scientists suspect that “herd immunity” for the coronavirus—when enough people have been infected

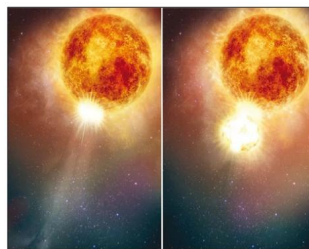
or vaccinated that the virus can no longer spread widely—may be closer than previously thought. Early in the pandemic, epidemiologists estimated that the threshold was 70 percent of a given population. But more than a dozen scientists told *The New York Times* that statistical modeling suggests that herd immunity might occur at 50 percent, or possibly even lower. Some say that particularly hard-hit neighborhoods may already be there. “I’m quite prepared to believe that there are pockets in New York City and London that have substantial immunity,” says Harvard epidemiologist Bill Hanage. But other epidemiologists warn that focusing on herd immunity is a distraction and could encourage people to abandon measures proven to reduce spread, such as mask wearing. Antibody testing has shown that no city or country is yet close to a 50 percent previous-infection rate; only 10 percent of the global population has Covid-19 antibodies. “We’d be playing with fire if we pretended we’re done with this,” says Jeffrey Shaman, an epidemiologist at Columbia University.

Where cavemen slept

Archaeologists in South Africa have found what might be the world’s oldest mattress. Toward the back of the Border Cave in the Lebombo Mountains, the researchers unearthed fossilized grass beds sitting atop layers of ash. The sleeping mats were made some 200,000 years ago—pushing the earliest record of human bedding back by more than 100,000 years—and were relatively sophisticated. The base layer of ash would have deterred crawling insects, because it dehydrates the bugs and can block their breathing. Archaeologists also identified traces of burned camphor bush, which is still used as an insect repellent in South Africa. Banishing pests made it possible for the caves’ residents “to occupy the site for longer, otherwise it would have to be abandoned,” study author Lyn Wadley, from Johannesburg’s University of the Witwatersrand, tells *Gizmodo.com*. Stone shards and traces of tool manufacturing found in the bedding suggest that, like many people now working from home during the pandemic, the cave dwellers may have used their beds as workstations.

Gesundheit, Betelgeuse

Astronomers think they’ve worked out why one of the brightest stars in the night sky underwent a dramatic dimming late last year: It’s the result of an enormous cosmic sneeze. The star, Betelgeuse, is some 725 light-years from Earth. Classified as a red supergiant—the largest type



An illustration of the sneeze

of star—it is more than 10 times the mass of our sun. Between fall 2019 and February of this year, Betelgeuse faded to less than half its normal brightness. This prompted speculation that it was about to explode as a supernova, a process in which a star

blasts out bursts of gas and dust. The new research, based on observations

from the Hubble Space Telescope, confirms those suspicions, reports *Reuters.com*. spurts of dense, hot gas shot through the star’s upper atmosphere, “almost like a sneeze,” says study leader Andrea Dupree, from the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. After travel-

ing a few million miles, the cloud of material cooled to form dust—obscuring the star’s light and making it appear dimmer from Earth. That Betelgeuse will eventually blow up is certain. When that will happen, if it hasn’t already, remains unclear.

Review of reviews: Books

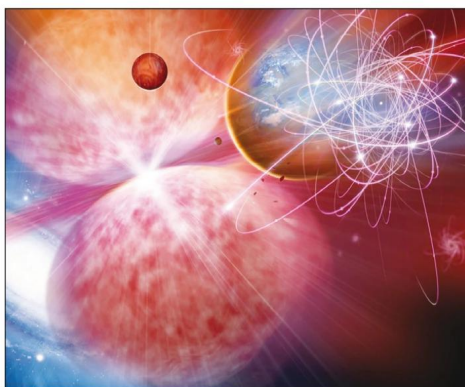
Book of the week

The End of Everything (Astrophysically Speaking)

by Katie Mack (Scribner, \$26)

A book about the demise of the universe doesn't sound like much fun, said **Leah Crane** in the *New Scientist*. But cosmologist Katie Mack has created a "rollicking tour" of the various possible paths to total oblivion that reads less like grim prophesy and "more like an animated discussion with your favorite quirky and brilliant professor." It helps that most of the scenarios are unlikely to unfold for billions of years, and that Mack, who teaches at North Carolina State University, can explain them clearly without resorting to equations or jargon. Though I regularly read and write about cosmology, "I learned a great deal," including new ways to share her excitement about her field. "What stands out most is her pure enjoyment of physics, and it is contagious."

Inevitably, there is some time travel involved, said **James Gleick** in *The New York Times*. Light emitted from a galaxy 10 billion



An artist's conceptualization of 'the Big Rip'

light-years away takes 10 billion years to reach Earth, and Mack explains how today's telescopes let us peer deeper into the past than ever before. Still, "most of what astronomers know comes not from seeing but from deduction," and Mack lays out a series of scientists' end-times scenarios. We could experience the "Big Crunch," a sudden reversal of the universe's expansion that would make the stars explode. Or perhaps the universe will expand perpetually, leading to "heat death"—a slow, agonizing progression toward a temperature of absolute zero. Dark matter could trigger

a "Big Rip" powerful enough to shred galaxies, planets, and subatomic particles. "The scariest prospect, however, is also the one closest to Mack's heart," said **Lee Billings** in *The Wall Street Journal*, because the moment she learned about "vacuum decay" was the moment that sparked her passion for cosmic eschatology: Over tea and cookies, a professor who was bouncing his 3-year-old daughter on his knee explained that at any moment a quantum bubble could form and expand at the speed of light, vaporizing everything it touches.

"*The End of Everything* is already out of date," said **Alexander Masters** in *The Spectator* (U.K.). This isn't Mack's fault: "In this blissful subject, new insights arrive daily," many of them complex and hallucinatory enough to boggle the brightest minds. "There's a lovely sense of playground scrabbling in Mack's picture of scientific progress," an amusing ongoing drama in which theorists are forever duking it out. Does Mack sort through the din and identify our eventual killer? Not exactly. Instead, she looks on, "almost dancing with excitement," as the potential suspects change from day to day.

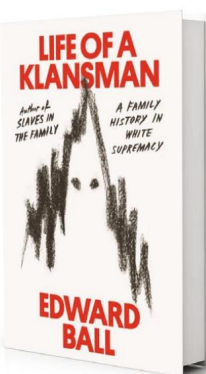
Novel of the week Summer

by Ali Smith (Pantheon, \$28)

The up-to-the-minute novels in Ali Smith's *Seasonal Quartet* "have been boon companions," said **Dwight Garner** in *The New York Times*. "It's hard to say if they'll hold up as lasting works of art," but they've arrived almost annually since 2016, and "each has been like a push notice that clicks open in your mind." In the concluding volume, a wandering plot coalesces loosely around two teenagers in 2020 England: climate-conscious Sacha and her contrarian younger brother, Robert, who wind up traveling with a young estranged couple to the village where Albert Einstein first lived after escaping Nazi Germany. Smith actually works in Covid and the George Floyd protests, and "if she were even an ounce less talented, it would fall apart," said **Charles Finch** in *The Boston Globe*. But "she's a great writer, quite possibly bound for a Nobel Prize," so look past her hoary jokes and the other occasional byproducts of her self-imposed rush to publish. No other contemporary novelist "has come closer to describing the particular sad informed madness of our times."

Life of a Klansman: A Family History in White Supremacy

by Edward Ball (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$28)



"The demons lurking in family stories are often the most difficult to exorcise," said **W. Ralph Eubanks** in *The Wall Street Journal*. But author Edward Ball earned a 1998 National Book Award for *Slaves in the Family*, his memoir about

his plantation-owning ancestors, and he has now extended his reckoning with his forebears' role in America's history of race-based oppression. The main subject of his "brave" new book is a maternal great-great-grandfather from New Orleans who served in the Confederate Army and became an active foot soldier in a violent white-supremacist paramilitary organization allied with the Ku Klux Klan. In attempting to understand both the motives and effects of this ancestor's belligerence, Ball has opened a window on history that must be confronted. *Life of a Klansman* is "a story for our cultural moment."

If you want to be charitable to Ball's ancestor, "you might call him a victim of 'economic anxiety,'" said **Julian Lucas** in *Harper's*. Born in 1832, Polycarp Constant Lecorgne grew up in a moneyed white French Creole family but drifted downward from wealthy carpenter with several slaves to indebted renter on an all-black block in a city where formerly subservient black neighbors were exercising power. Ball never excuses, but makes it easy to grasp, the social upheaval that motivated a white backlash that saw members of the White League infiltrate Louisiana's police forces, fire companies, and political clubs. When 200 black demonstrators were massacred outside the state's 1866 constitutional convention, Lecorgne was probably among the army of white assailants.

This is more than one man's story, said **Erik Gleibermann** in *The Washington Post*. Ball estimates that half of white Americans have Klan members in their family tree, but he doesn't fully connect the systemic racism of Lecorgne's time with our own, even when he brings in the voices of descendants of the White League's victims. "*Life of a Klansman* is valuable as a self-searching profile of ancestral atrocity," but because it says so little about 2020 America, it "ultimately lands softly on the bloody terrain."

Best books...chosen by Ilya Kaminsky

Poet Ilya Kaminsky is the author of three collections, including *Deaf Republic*, a 2019 National Book Award finalist and winner of a Los Angeles Times Book Prize. Below, he names his favorite new poetry collections of this year.



Guillotine by Eduardo C. Corral. Here is a beautiful and moving book of love, immigration, and grief. Switching between Spanish and English, between Eros and exile, it is a lyric testimony to how we live inside bodies, across borders. A pain herein is made into a song.

Obit by Victoria Chang. A long elegy for the poet's mother, *Obit* is the kind of poetry collection that creates a new genre. A reinvention of form? A symphony? A manifesto? All of the above and then some. It is heartbreaking and enthralling. It sings and instructs. It is a world all its own; one that changes ours.

Postcolonial Love Poem by Natalie Diaz. A Mojave poet offers a great lesson in what a collection of poems can do, from the powerful lyrics for her brother to erotic poems to those about the disappearance of indigenous people to poems about what we do to the natural world. All of it comes together as one hymn: a song of candor and tenderness.

In the Lateness of the World by Carolyn Forché. This book is filled with poems that speak

with ethical urgency. Open it to "The Boatman," for instance, ("I will see that you arrive safely, my friend") and you will come under the spell of something as fresh as morning news and as timeless as a parable. It is a book that takes a journey around the world and into the world. Yet there is also something new here for Forché: an even larger scope, a prophetic mode.

Stranger by Night by Edward Hirsch. Nearly every poem here is one sentence long, given to the loved one who's lost. In the time of Covid and Zoom funerals, many people will relate to the imagery of being intimately alone with grief, yet at a distance. Hirsch writes movingly about his gradual loss of vision, while addressing all kinds of loss and offering an astonished discovery of what grief might reveal.

Homie by Danez Smith. This book is so many different things in one: a hymn to friendship, an elegy, and a thrilling, dynamic political stand. There is a warmth in these poems that isn't something one often finds in American poetry, and humor and sadness. *Homie* is as exuberant and bold as it is heartbreaking.

Author of the week

Lawrence Osborne

Lawrence Osborne is growing into the role of roaming expat novelist, said **Katie Law** in the London *Evening Standard* (U.K.). A British tabloid has called him "the bastard child of Patricia Highsmith and Graham Greene," and, at 61,



the middle-class-born, Cambridge-educated Brit is piling up enough adventures and novels about the

heedless jet set to justify the label. In communist Poland, he ran a collective blueberry farm. In early-aughts New York City, he conned his way into a job as *Vogue's* traveling wine critic. "I know nothing about wine," he says. "I'd meet the guys in the wine estates, drink everything they'd got, put it on expenses, and my driver would take me home." Hollywood has taken a keen interest in his recent novels set in Morocco, Baja California, and the Greek islands, which means he finally has money to throw around. "It's all extremely new for me, but it's been snowballing very quickly."

Osborne's latest novel, *The Glass Kingdom*, is set largely in the city and the once-grand apartment building where he has lived for several years, said **Dwyer Murphy** in *CrimeReads.com*. A young American arrives in Bangkok carrying a suitcase stuffed with an ill-gotten \$200,000 and tries to disappear. But she is drawn into the lives of other expats who reside in the same complex, until unrest in the streets reveals their all-against-all amorality. Pure evil is scarce in Osborne's world but not unforgivable transgression. He argues that many humans are more dominated by their pathologies than they realize. "All it takes is a small crisis, a trigger," he says. "Life usually provides it."

Also of interest...in solitary pursuits

Death in Her Hands

by Ottessa Moshfegh (Penguin, \$27)



"Like Henry James or Vladimir Nabokov," Ottessa Moshfegh is "a writer who is touched by both genius and cruelty," said Kevin Power in *The New Yorker*. And cruelty is "a seriously underrated virtue in a novelist,"

as the author of *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* proves in this tale of a lonely woman who loses herself in the imagined details of a murder that she decides to investigate. The "dark exhilaration" of Moshfegh's fiction emerges from the emptiness at the mystery's heart.

Tokyo Ueno Station

by Yu Miri (Riverhead, \$25)



The afterlife offers no relief for the narrator of this "gorgeous, haunting" novel, said Michael Schaub in *NPR.org*. Kazu, a former construction worker who spent his last years homeless and living in a park, finds

himself returning as a ghost to the same place, burdened with the same doubts and worries. The story, which revisits Kazu's misfortunes and illuminates poverty's unfairness, "packs an enormous emotional punch." Though at times angry, *Tokyo Ueno Station* is "also quite beautiful."

Must I Go

by Yiyun Li (Random House, \$28)



"Yiyun Li is a master of going to the places where words fail us," said Adrienne Westenfeld in *Esquire.com*. In her latest novel, a caustic yet charismatic octogenarian furiously

annotates the published diaries of a deceased former lover, wrestling with his memory of events and her own buried history. Her daughter committed suicide at 27, and as she circles back to that loss, we witness Li's great talent for exposing language's insufficiencies, "its refusal to capture the depth and breadth of our feelings."

The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Cartoonist

by Adrian Tomine (Drawn & Quarterly, \$30)



Adrian Tomine long has been "one of the foremost talents in contemporary comics," said Joe Marczynski in *TheGuardian.com*. But life, even for the guy who published *Optic Nerve* at 16, delivers more humiliations than triumphs, as this wry graphic memoir chronicles.

Tomine "has an incredible ability to capture universal fears," among them the fear of wasting one's life. Does cartooning even count as art? This work "makes a compelling case that it does."

Sculpture gardens: Why the time is just right for outdoor art

“Outdoor art is having a moment,” said Elissaveta Brandon in *SmithsonianMag.com*. Throughout the country, as social-distancing rules have shuttered museums and discouraged indoor gatherings, “sculpture parks have become outdoor living rooms,” attracting casual strollers and picnickers who, by instinctively embracing the stimulation of such public spaces, are “cementing the importance of an art movement that began in the 1960s.” And who can blame them? “There is something particularly dynamic about outdoor art—a constant dialogue between form, material, changing seasons, and changing light,” and if you are near a major museum or university, you are probably near at least one of the country’s 300 sculpture parks. I recently set out to revisit a few favorite sites in the Northeast, wondering if putting up with Covid hurdles such as timed ticketing would be worth it, said Lance Esplund in *The Wall Street Journal*. “The answer was a resounding yes.”

The history of American sculpture parks actually begins in South Carolina, said Pauline Frommer in *Frommers.com*. Brookgreen Gardens, founded in 1931 and located about 20 miles south of Myrtle



Alexander Liberman’s *Iliad*: A Storm King magnet

Beach, is a 300-acre garden that is now home to the nation’s largest collection of statuary: “1,445 works, including a spectacular rendering of the goddess Diana by Augustus Saint-Gaudens.” But treasure troves of contemporary work began emerging in more recent decades. It’s hard to beat the setting of Seattle’s Olympic Sculpture Park, where works by Louise Nevelson, Alexander Calder, and Ellsworth Kelly enjoy views of the city’s skyline and across Elliot Bay to the Olympic Mountains. Visiting Dallas’ Nasher Sculpture Center,

which reopened last week, is “like a walk-through cram session for an Intro to Modern Art final exam.” Works by Picasso, de Kooning, and many other masters adorn its verdant garden.

Storm King is another special place, said Simon Schama in the *Financial Times*, and not just because of its size and proximity to New York City. The 500-acre sculpture park sits along the same beautiful stretch of the Hudson River that gave birth to American landscape painting. And the work is spectacular. Richard Serra’s weathered-steel *Schunnemunk Fork* strikes a harmonious balance with nature, while “a whole herd of Mark di Suvero’s pieces stand in the tall grass like so many post-industrial dinosaurs nibbling at the Jurassic pasture.” Elsewhere, Maya Lin’s *Storm King WaveField*, a rippled grass field completed in 2008, sits in dialogue with an undulating half-mile-long fieldstone wall created by Andy Goldsworthy in the 1990s. Goldsworthy characterized the wall as a gentle wrestling match between stones and trees: Sometimes the living elements win, sometimes the lifeless structure. “You feel this—along with the everyday pondering of vitality and mortality—now more than ever.”

Down in the Weeds...

Bright Eyes

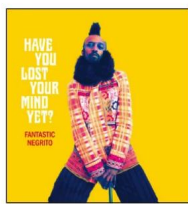


When Conor Oberst was 19, he “wrote like a punk-rock Rimbaud and sang like he was perpetually on the verge of sobbing,” said Lindsay Zoladz in *The New York Times*. At 40, the

Omaha singer-songwriter has resurrected the band that established him as a polestar for “a certain kind of depressed, literate adolescent,” and the trio’s first album in nine years mixes gloominess that now feels realistic with a “battered optimism,” as if Oberst has, even after a recent divorce and the death of a brother, been “keeping some uncompromisingly youthful part of himself alive.” The album’s “richly orchestrated chamber-pop production—thick with strings, horns, bagpipes, and more—calls back to the wall-of-sound approach of classic Bright Eyes records,” said Mark Richardson in *The Wall Street Journal*. Though Oberst has pursued various side projects as his influence on a new generation has grown, this band “remains the project that allows him to dig deepest into his psyche,” where he excels. “On a Bright Eyes record, he doesn’t worry about going over the top emotionally.”

Have You Lost Your Mind Yet?

Fantastic Negrito



Fantastic Negrito is emerging as “one of America’s most unique and unusual artists,” said Hal Horowitz in *American Songwriter*. The 52-year-old Bay Area has won two

recent Grammys as a contemporary blues performer, but his music remains “difficult to pin down.” On his fearless third album, the producer, singer-songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist leaps from psychedelic soul to rock-oriented funk to “a delightfully diverse combination of blues, gospel, and R&B.” Very few other artists push boundaries with “such innovative inclusiveness.” Inspired by the classic sociopolitical albums of Sly Stone and Stevie Wonder, *Lost Your Mind* “feels like it was cosmically planted in the right place at the right time,” said Emma Johnston in *Classic Rock* magazine. Though Fantastic Negrito has been politically outspoken before, here he’s “working on a much more intimate, personal level” while demonstrating the musical versatility of Prince. “This album is the work of a man committed to his own vision, both for his music and for the troubled and broken world around him.”

Imploding the Mirage

The Killers



The Killers’ new album is a reminder of how this Las Vegas-based rock band became one of the most commercially successful acts of this century, said Jem Aswad in *Variety*.

At a time when rock usually doesn’t sell, Brandon Flowers and company keep churning out “heartstring-tugging anthems” that play well in arenas because they’re “perfect for singing emotively with an impassioned fist over the chest.” The 10 songs on the band’s sixth album “breeze by at a steady and efficient clip,” craftily mixing heartland rock and new wave in a way that “doesn’t fit any scene or genre.” These are, in other words, “more big songs for happy people,” said Bobby Olivier in *Spin.com*. Would it kill the Killers to take a risk? At a time when they could have tried out a new path while still pleasing concert audiences with their greatest hits, they have instead followed “the same tedious, chest-pounding formula” that made them popular, creating a recent No. 1 song in “Caution” and providing themselves “an easy bridge to the next arena tour.”

Tenet

Directed by
Christopher Nolan
(PG-13)



A time-bending
CIA agent races to derail
an apocalyptic clash.

Judged by its visuals alone, Christopher Nolan's time-bending new spy thriller "demands to be seen in a cinema, and on the biggest possible screen," said Jonathan Romney in the *Los Angeles Times*. But for a big-budget movie that was touted as being ingenious enough to inspire a rush back into theaters, it "lacks a certain living spark." In short, "*Tenet* is entertaining, but it isn't exactly *fun*"—except, perhaps, when the director of *Memento* and the *Dark Knight* trilogy uses its concept of a secret time-reversing technology to stage "spectacular, over-the-top" action scenes that seem to run backward and forward at the same time. John David Washington plays a secret agent tasked with preventing a Russian oligarch from starting World War III, and the *BlackKkKlansman* star makes for a calm but "enormously likable" audience proxy, said Nicholas Fonseca in *Entertainment Weekly*. When Robert Pattinson assumes a sidekick role here, "you see the promise of a future buddy



Washington in London: A Bond with a sci-fi edge

comedy." But like the viewer, Washington's CIA operative is often both determined to understand the action and bewildered by it, and like most Nolan films, this one "refuses to come up for air"—moving from London to Oslo to Mumbai and the Amalfi Coast while never letting up on the growing anxiety or "wearying" barrage of unenlightening exposition. The movie, which is getting an unusual Monday limited release before opening more widely on Sept. 3, "plays best when it stops showing us its work and morphs into the fanciest James Bond romp you ever did see, complete with car chases that slip and loop like spaghetti, and bespoke tailoring you actually want to reach into the screen and stroke," said Guy Lodge in *Variety*. *Tenet* isn't the holy grail, but it doesn't have to be. "It's just a movie: a big, brashly beautiful, grandiosely enjoyable one that will provide succor to audiences long starved for escapist spectacle on this beefy, made-for-Imax scale."

The Personal History of David Copperfield

Directed by
Armando Iannucci
(PG)



A Dickensian lad
finds his way.

Charles Dickens' fictional world turns out to be a natural home for *Veep* creator Armando Iannucci, said Katey Rich in *VanityFair.com*. Iannucci's lively new film reminds us "how modern *David Copperfield* has felt all along," because the 1850 novel presents as a writer's account of a writer's life story, and Iannucci gleefully exploits the opportunity to hustle the tale along where needed and to goose each scene for maximum audience pleasure. Assisted by "a ridiculously stacked cast" that starts with Dev Patel in the title role, the movie makes every stop in David's up-and-down journey "a new gift for the audience to unwrap." With Tilda Swinton, Ben Whishaw, and Hugh Laurie in



Morfydd Clark's Dora serenades Patel.

key roles, the performances never fail to convince while the color-blind casting adds good-humored spirit to the proceedings, said Eric Kohn in *IndieWire.com*. Unfortunately, Iannucci's overall approach "veers from nuttiness to earnest restraint, as if the filmmaker were at war with his better instincts." Actually, he is in full control at every moment, showing himself to be "a master of competing registers," said James Parker in *The Atlantic*. In fact, Iannucci "knows in a couple of places better than Dickens himself what *David Copperfield* is about." The novelist, as this movie understands, was perpetually amazed by people of every kind. "He knew us all so well, and we never stopped blowing his mind."

Other new movies

The 24th

This drama set in 1917 Houston offers a "blisteringly relevant" look at a revealingly grim event, said Lindsey Bahr in the Associated Press. That summer, black soldiers mutinied in response to police abuse, resulting in a night of violence and 19 military hangings. "This is a difficult story in which violence and dehumanization beget violence and dehumanization," and the movie could have been subtler. But it finds an appealing lead in Trai Byers and provides a "sobering and worthwhile"



Byers: Honor denied

history lesson.
(\$7 on demand)
Not rated

Cut Throat City

Set in post-Katrina New Orleans, this new crime drama from the musician and director RZA is "film noir for the graffiti and graphic-novel age," said Michael O'Sullivan in *The Washington Post*. Three friends hurting in the hurricane's aftermath accept a heist job that doesn't go as planned, but the co-founder of Wu-Tang Clan shows "an ear and eye for lively detail" that makes his

latest movie "a bit more than a genre exercise." With potent cameos from Terrence Howard, Wesley Snipes, and Ethan Hawke. (In theaters only) R

Words on Bathroom Walls

Yes, this adaptation of a YA novel is "a warm and fuzzy teen romance" in which schizophrenia is represented, in part, by three characters seen only by the protagonist, a senior trying to just finish high school in new surroundings, said Roger Moore in *RogersMovieNation.com*. But "the performances are stellar," the humor well played, and the terror of schizophrenia vivid and believable. "Whatever precious touches emerge," the film simply works. (In theaters only) PG-13

Streaming tips*Series that'll take you back...***Rome**

So many of the things that made *Game of Thrones* a phenomenon—devious political machinations, gratuitous sex scenes, grisly violence—were first present in this Emmy-winning drama series. Attention to ancient Rome's odd details and customs paint a place as weird as *GoT*'s Westeros, and the historical characters are every bit as ruthless or valiant as those in George R.R. Martin's fantasy world. **HBO Max**

Victoria

Queen Elizabeth II gets all the awards-season attention these days, but Britain's second-longest-reigning monarch deserves love, too. Across three seasons, Jenna Coleman grew into the role of Victoria, who oversaw a massive expansion of her empire, bore nine children, and apparently had great chemistry with her husband, Prince Albert. **Amazon Prime**

Vikings

For six seasons, this History channel series was everything you could want in a historic epic. There's that much blood-soaked fun to be had following Ragnar Lothbrok, a figure of Scandinavian lore said to have risen from farmer to king by raiding 9th-century England. **Hulu**

The Last Kingdom

If you've seen all of *Vikings*, why not voyage across the North Sea to hang with the Saxons? Watching this BBC series is like getting the other side of the story, and Alexander Dreyfuss's Uhtred is a warrior on par with Travis Fimmel's Ragnar. **Netflix**

The Tudors

If you like history with a big dose of lust, *The Tudors* is for you. Lush production aids a steamy telling of King Henry VIII's infamous exploits. Jonathan Rhys Myers (as Henry) and Natalie Dormer (as Anne Boleyn) lead the parade of eye candy. **Netflix**

The Week's guide to what's worth watching**Raised by Wolves**

An ambitious new sci-fi series from Ridley Scott imagines a future in which Earth is a lost cause and human children are being reared by android parents on a distant planet. The director of *Alien* and *Blade Runner* helmed the first two episodes himself, bringing his unique visual imagination to a tale that eerily echoes the fable of the Three Little Pigs while exploring the challenges presented by the human instinct for religion. With Travis Fimmel of *Vikings* as a human warrior who initiates a violent clash. *Available for streaming Thursday, Sept. 3, HBO Max*

Young Wallander

Detective Kurt Wallander didn't become a weathered loner overnight. In this new prequel series inspired by Henning Mankell's Swedish crime novels, Wallander is a newly sworn-in police officer who's unable to save a teenager murdered in front of him in a gruesome public execution. Adam Palsen steps into the role Kenneth Branagh filled across four previous seasons and quickly must track down his first killers. *Available for streaming Thursday, Sept. 3, Netflix*

The Boys

The first season of *The Boys* was a happy surprise, particularly for people who believe superheroes need to be taken down a peg. The small group of humans who banded together last year to battle the world's arrogant, misbehaving "supes" are coming off a serious thumping but far from ready to quit as new episodes arrive. *Available for streaming Friday, Sept. 4, Amazon Prime*

I'm Thinking of Ending Things

Welcome back, Charlie Kaufman. The writer-director who made the early aughts so meta returns with a horror-tinged thriller that plays like *Get Out* mixed with such signature Kaufman screenplays as *Being John Malkovich* and *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. Things get existential quickly for a woman on a snowy trip to visit her boyfriend's parents, as a series of strange events causes time and identity to unravel. With Jessie Buckley, Toni Collette, and David Thewlis. *Available for streaming Friday, Sept. 4, Netflix*

*Method Man and Rainey in Power's new spinoff***Power: Book II—Ghost**

Fans still reeling from the shocking fifth-season finale of *Power* should receive some long-awaited clarity in this first of four planned spin-offs. With the mystery of who killed James "Ghost" St. Patrick solved, the new series shifts focus to the former drug kingpin's son, Tariq (Michael Rainey Jr.), who is starting college while his mother, Tasha, sits in prison for the crime he committed. *Sunday, Sept. 6, at 9 p.m., Starz*

Other highlights**Planet Earth: A Celebration**

Never had the time to watch those epic BBC nature series? View the greatest hits in this one-hour special featuring new narration by Sir David Attenborough. *Monday, Aug. 31, at 8 p.m., BBC America*

Transplant

A talented young doctor from Syria starts a new life while bringing the lessons of war to his work at a Toronto hospital in a new medical drama series starring Hamza Haq. *Tuesday, Sept. 1, at 10 p.m., NBC*

The Sounds

New Zealand's picturesque Marlborough Sounds provide the backdrop for a thriller series about a Canadian woman who learns she's chosen the wrong paradise when her new husband disappears while kayaking. *Available for streaming Thursday, Sept. 3, Acorn TV*

Show of the week**Away**

Commanding the first human mission to Mars requires sustained focus. But astronaut Emma Green is not long into the three-year trek before the husband and teenager she left behind bring her worries distracting enough to shake her crew's faith in her. Oscar winner Hilary Swank brings furrowed-brow charm to the role as Emma and her colleagues learn to manage their home and work challenges together. The series isn't the subtlest of space dramas, but a solidly built story about isolation and the indomitable human spirit could be a good fit for the fall. *Available for streaming Friday, Sept. 4, Netflix*

*Swank explores new worlds.*

Glazed salmon with kadaif: Making every fillet a party

Three layers of complementary textures and flavors combine below to create “the most unexpected and totally satisfying dish,” said Danielle Renov in *Peas, Love & Carrots* (Mesorah Publications). The crowning touch is *kadaif*, or *kadayif*, which makes such an excellent topping for fish that you should use this recipe as inspiration for other experiments. The finely shredded phyllo dough, often used for Turkish desserts, can be purchased frozen (which is my preference) or dried, in sealed bags.

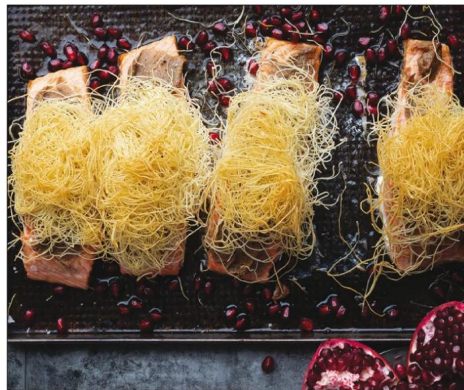
The crispy “party-in-your-mouth” *kadaif* sits atop a paste that combines creamy, earthy tahini with sweet tamarind. And below that sits the rich, flaky salmon, which I cook in individual fillets to avoid having to cut through the *kadaif* later.

Need more ideas? Try sprinkling the salmon with Montreal steak seasoning and spreading on a layer of horseradish mayo (recipe below). Or simply trade out the tahini and tamarind for a smear of honey mustard. “Go, play, have fun, and then tell me what you did, so I can do it, too.”

Recipe of the week

Tahini and tamarind-glazed salmon with kadaif topping

8 (1½-inch) fillets of salmon (with or without skin)



Play with the glaze, keep the kadaif.

1½ tsp kosher salt
½ tsp coarsely ground black pepper
½ cup tahini paste
2 tbsp plus 1 tsp tamarind concentrate
2 tbsp maple syrup
4 tbsp olive oil
4 cups frozen *kadaif*, defrosted
½ cup pomegranate seeds, for garnish

Preheat oven to 350. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Arrange salmon fillets on sheet and sprinkle with salt and pepper. In a bowl, combine tahini, tamarind, maple syrup, and 2 tbsp olive oil. Spread about 1 tbsp of this mixture over each salmon fillet.

To a large bowl, add *kadaif*; drizzle with

olive oil. Gently toss the *kadaif* in the bowl 2-3 times to just spread the oil. Top each salmon fillet with *kadaif* strands, covering fish with a sort of nest.

Bake for 18-20 minutes until fish is just cooked through and *kadaif* is golden and crunchy. To reach maximum crunchability, it may be necessary to finish with two minutes of broiling.

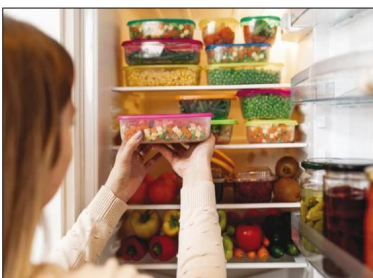
Garnish with pomegranate seeds and serve hot or cold. Serves 8.

Horseradish mayo

2 eggs
1 large clove garlic
2½ tsp kosher salt
1 tsp ground black pepper
juice of 2 lemons (about ¼ cup)
½ cup prepared white horseradish
2 cups canola oil

Combine ingredients in the tall container that comes with your immersion blender. Lower the blender until it touches the bottom, then turn it on. Blend until you no longer see streams of oil running downward, then carefully lift one side of the blender to allow any more oil to stream in and continue blending, lifting alternate sides as you draw the blender upward and eventually reach the top of the mixture.

Lunch at home: Tips for families whose schools aren't opening



Precut fixings: A parent's best friend

child is happy with the same (healthy, nutritionally balanced) lunch each day, roll with it. Otherwise, do what schools do and stick to a schedule with dependable favorites, such as “Pasta Mondays,” “Taco Tuesdays,” and so on.

Rethink the “lunch box.” Create a box for the refrigerator and another for the pantry in which you keep all lunchtime ingredients. That way you won’t waste time each day hunting for the mustard or sliced provolone and then returning them to their separate places.

Embrace leftovers. “If there’s a silver lining to school at home, it’s the ability to reheat leftovers for your kids midday.” So favor dinners that reheat well, such as braises, stews, and roast vegetables. “Popping a plate in the microwave takes less time than slapping together a grilled-cheese sandwich, and it feels special to eat a steaming hot lunch.”

Deputize the kids. If your children sometimes refuse to eat what they’re served, try involving them in the prep, even if they’ll only be spreading peanut butter and jelly on bread. Your kitchen will be messier, but less food will go to waste.

For most of us parents, said Genevieve Ko in the *Los Angeles Times*, “feeding children is as much a mental and emotional struggle as it is a logistical one.” Below are some tips for how to get lunch on the table every day for children you thought would be in school but instead are home full- or part-time for another season of online classes. But logistical advice will be truly useful only if you first accept that not every meal has to be great. Some can just get the job done.

Create a routine. “Deciding what to make is half the struggle of preparing a meal,” so if your

Wine: Italy's rosatos

If you’ve never explored Italy’s pink wines, now might be the time, said Elin McCoy in *Bloomberg.com*. Prices on French rosé have been pushed up by the Trump administration’s 25 percent tariffs, and Italy’s rosatos are more diverse, often offering “savory, cherry, and herb flavors that will still be delicious on the table long after Labor Day.”

2018 Leone di Castris Five Roses Rosato (\$14).

This “grandfather of Italian rosés,” first made in 1943, “boasts scents of wildflowers and bright, crushed-raspberry flavors.”

2019 Attems Rosé Pinot Grigio Ramato (\$15).

This “rich, spicy” *ramato*, made in Friuli from pinot grigio grapes, “shows off mineral tones and a slightly bitter after-taste.” It’s “superb with food.”

2019 Tiberio Cerasuolo d’Abruzzo (\$20).

Made from red montepulciano grapes, this fuchsia-colored pour is “almost like a light red” — “smoky, savory, and silky textured, with tart cherry-raspberry flavors.”



Colliding crises: Covid meets hurricane and wildfire season

As wildfires ripped across California this week and a potential Category 4 hurricane took aim at the Texas-Louisiana coast, said Trisha Thadani in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, hundreds of thousands of Americans were facing “another unprecedented challenge: evacuating amid a pandemic.” In California, where fire has consumed an area larger than the state of Delaware since Aug. 10 and more than 170,000 people have been forced from their homes, the Red Cross responded to the confluence of crises by delaying the opening of shelters—instead shuttling evacuees to hotel rooms and dorms where possible, while encouraging others to sleep in their cars at designated areas where food and water was supplied. Even when shelters did open, many people huddled outside to avoid contracting Covid-19, including Gary Browne, a retired Marine from Vacaville. “I’m 72,” he said. “If I get it, I’m a goner.”

Texas and Louisiana were managing an even larger evacuation—after telling more than 750,000 people to flee their homes before Hurricane Laura made landfall, said Ron Brackett and Jan Wesner Childs in *Weather.com*. Shelter capacities were being capped, masks and sanitizer supplied, and extra buses provided so that evacuees wouldn’t be crowded together in transit. But the governors of both states encouraged residents to reduce the odds



A fire evacuee at a shelter in Vacaville, Calif.

of infection by staying with friends or booking hotel rooms. Officials are smart to worry about such impacts, said Linda Poon in *Bloomberg.com*. A new study led by a Columbia University epidemiologist estimates that new infections caused by storm evacuations can increase tenfold if states direct evacuees toward counties with high infection rates rather than low.

Because the hurricane and wildfire seasons are far from over, said Doug Mahoney and Eve O’Neill in *NYTimes.com*, anyone who lives in a high-risk area

should prepare for emergencies with Covid-19 in mind. First, contact someone you could stay with in an emergency well before any particular threat arises. If you’ve used an assigned local shelter before and might do so again, check if it has changed, as local managers may add locations to avoid crowding. (To access such information, Google your county’s name plus “emergency management.”) Allow yourself more time than usual for general preparations: securing your home, planning for your pets’ survival, and familiarizing yourself with evacuation routes. If you live in a wildfire area, “we cannot stress this enough”: Pack a go bag for every family member, each bag equipped with water, food, cash, medications, and a face mask, which will be required at shelters. “Knowing what to expect ahead of time—and what’s expected of you—goes a long way toward protecting everyone.”

Distancing season: Making the most of it

A healthier drinking life?

New federal guidelines in the works may soon put a damper on cocktail hour, said Sumathi Reddy in *The Wall Street Journal*. Following an 8 percent rise in U.S. alcohol consumption over the past two decades—and a surge in booze sales when pandemic shutdowns struck—an advisory committee is urging that men be counseled to consume no more than one drink a day, halving the previous volume to match what women have long been told. The change, which has to be approved by two federal departments before officially becoming part of U.S. dietary guidelines, comes in light of growing evidence that moderate alcohol consumption contributes to more than 60 diseases, including six types of cancer. “Whatever kind of study you look at,” says Boston University alcohol researcher Timothy Naimi, “two drinks a day is associated with a higher risk of death than drinking one drink a day.”

More than one way to declutter

All of America is decluttering these days, and there’s more than one way to join in, said Jennifer Barger in *The Washington Post*. Author Marie Kondo has sold millions of books advising throwing out anything that doesn’t “spark joy,” but her extreme approach “isn’t

for everyone.” Instead, weed out things you haven’t used in a full year, and be especially hard on items—clothes, toys—that no longer all fit in the closets and containers you have. Don’t try to tackle an entire home at once. Set a timer to put in 15 minutes each day. And call in a friend or a pro (see *napo.net*) when a second brain can help with hard decisions. “Can you hold on to a few items for sentimental reasons? Sure, but within reason.”

How to build a better sandcastle

Next time you head to the beach, bring some 5-gallon buckets, said Scott Yorko in *SmithsonianMag.com*. That’s what pros use to erect the towering sandcastles that win prizes. Keep a bucket for water and cut the bottom out of others with a utility knife. Building near the water, set the buckets upside down, pour in wet sand plus water, filling about a third at a time before tamping down the sand. Lift the bucket and repeat, setting cylinders of sand next to one another until you have a base as wide as the castle will be tall. You’ll stack cylinders until you’ve created a stable pyramid, then start carving from the top, shaving away sand using simple tools such as cake cutters or palette knives. “Don’t be afraid to take risks: You can fix just about anything.”

And if you’re bored...



Geocaching is going mainstream, said Laura Tichy-Smith in *Florida Weekly*. The global scavenger hunt in which people track down hidden caches full of trinkets remained a relatively obscure pastime for much of its 20-year history, mostly because participants long relied on handheld GPS devices. Today, anyone with a smartphone can join the 7 million-member community at *Geocaching.com*, which has its own app. The caches themselves range from pill bottles to steamer trunks, and some owners stage complex puzzles, complete with clues—adding an elaborate quest for treasure to your family’s next walk in the woods.



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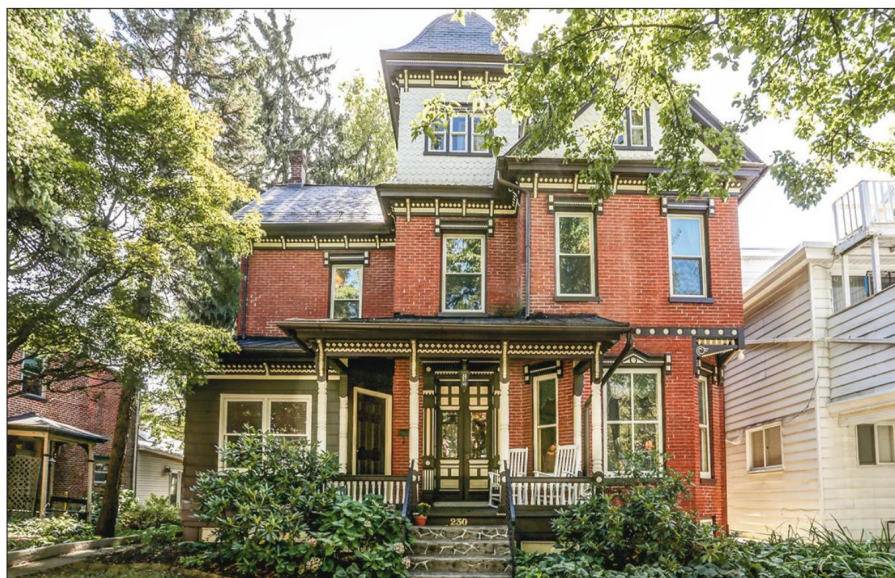
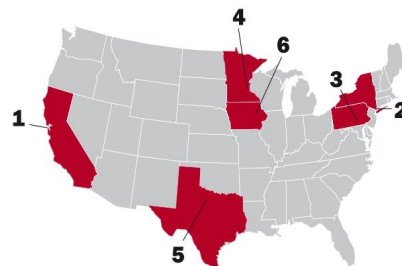


This week: Victorian homes

1 ► San Francisco This four-bedroom Victorian is steps from the Bush Street–Cottage Row Historic District in Lower Pacific Heights. The 1900 house features original moldings, bay windows, and high ceilings; a dining room with wet bar; a library with fireplace and ladder; and an en suite main bedroom with fireplace, claw-foot tub, and marble floor. The roof deck has a hot tub, shower, firepit, bar, and views of Sutro Tower and St. Dominic's Church. \$3,995,000. Nina Hatvany, Compass, (415) 710-6462



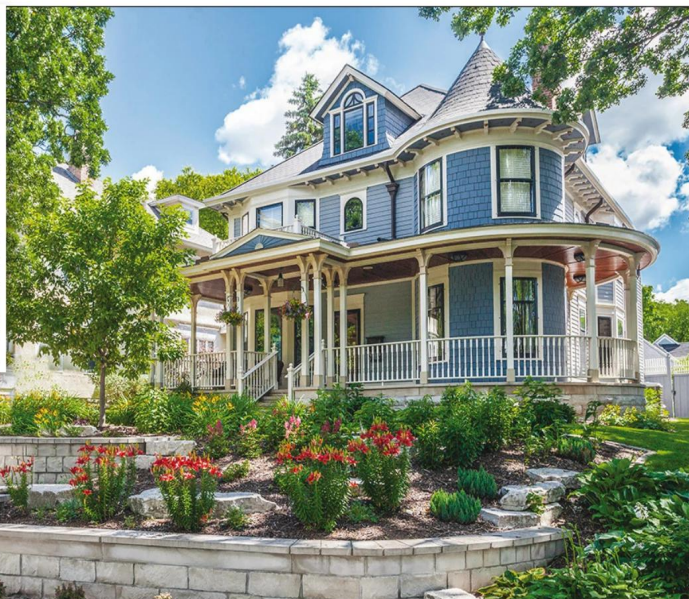
2 ▲ Larchmont, N.Y. The Gingerbread House is a five-bedroom Victorian Gothic cottage built in 1872 on the Long Island Sound. This seaside home has been completely renovated, with redone kitchen and bathrooms, updated electrical and plumbing systems, and an extension with a spiral staircase; preserved period details include jigsaw work, interior wood trim, and French doors. Outside are porches and balconies, lawns, trees, gardens, and direct beach access. \$2,950,000. France Mellet Tucker, Houlihan Lawrence, (914) 318-4973



3 ◀ Mechanicsburg, Pa. Built in 1896, this five-bedroom Victorian served as the parsonage for nearby Trinity Lutheran Church. Features include a slate roof, hardwood floors, millwork made from American chestnut, pocket doors, an ornate carved staircase, high ceilings, oversize rooms, a second-floor balcony, a large updated kitchen, and a separate entrance for a home office. The deep lot has front and back porches, back and side yards, and a detached garage. \$364,900. Lisa Myers, Coldwell Banker Realty, (717) 887-1123

4 ► Minneapolis

Built in 1902, this five-bedroom Queen Anne looks out on Bde Maka Ska, the city's largest lake. The house features hand-carved woodwork, curved walls and columns, three ornate fireplaces, and a large pictorial stained-glass window; rooms include a walk-in wine cellar, a marble-clad kitchen with breakfast nook, and an owner suite with spa bathroom and office. Outside are a front garden, a wraparound porch, and a fenced backyard with patio, lawn, flower beds, and three-car garage. \$2,195,000. Bruce Birkeland, Coldwell Banker Realty, (612) 414-3957



5 ◀ Weatherford, Texas Currently configured as a B&B, this 1897 "painted lady" stands in the town's historic district, near parks and the 1896 courthouse. The Queen Anne mansion has elaborately carved

wood doorways, mirrors, panels, and staircase; 10 bedrooms, including two guest suites with separate entrances and hot tubs; and a second-story ballroom with a domed ceiling. On the 5.1-acre grounds are mature trees, broad lawns, a grand entrance with circular driveway, and a swimming pool. \$995,000. Rozi Stone, Williams Trew/Luxury Portfolio International, (817) 454-0250

6 ► Vinton, Iowa

This 1900 five-bedroom home is set in a historic river town about 40 minutes from Cedar Rapids.

The house retains many period details, including a foyer with ornate millwork and stained-glass windows, the original kitchen cabinets, a dining room with pocket doors and fireplace, two three-season rooms, and a master suite with a reading nook. The corner property features a large wood deck and a greenhouse. \$229,900. Annie Kaestner, Skogman Realty, (319) 350-6770



Steal of the week



The news at a glance

The bottom line

■ American Airlines announced it will lay off 19,000 workers when federal aid ends Oct. 1. The airline, with 133,700 employees, says it will need to reduce head count by 40,000, including voluntary retirements. Delta Air Lines said it plans to furlough 1,941 of its pilots. *CNN.com*

■ More than 60 percent of economists in an August survey say the U.S. GDP will remain below its 2019 level until at least 2022. Economists expect at least 40 percent of pandemic business closures will be permanent. *Axios.com*

■ Leaked financial documents from the secretive data-mining company Palantir ahead of its IPO revealed the tech company lost \$579 million in 2019. Most of the revenue for Palantir, known for its counterterrorism work, comes from government contracts. *TechCrunch.com*

■ Thirty-three states and the District of Columbia now allow cocktails-to-go during the pandemic. Before Covid-19 struck, only

two states—Florida and Mississippi—allowed them on a limited basis. *Associated Press*

■ The onetime corporate raider Carl Icahn reaped \$1.3 billion from a short position in commercial mortgage-backed bonds, betting that long-suffering malls would default on their loans. *Bloomberg.com*

■ A 2009 rookie card of Los Angeles Angels star Mike Trout sold at auction for \$3.936 million, making it the most valuable sports card of all time. The price eclipsed a 2016 sale of a 1909 Honus Wagner T-206 card that sold for \$3.12 million. *ESPN.com*

Debt: U.S. debt level hits post-WWII high

“We crossed the line that debt hawks have warned us about for decades,” said Matt Phillips in *The New York Times*: The federal debt has surpassed the size of the U.S. economy for the first time since World War II. The debt has risen by more than \$3 trillion in just six months; as a share of the economy, it’s “the largest annual leap in American indebtedness since the 1790s.” U.S. debt now stands at \$20.53 trillion, or roughly 106 percent of GDP. That threshold was once dreaded as a “major breaking point.” Debt hawks warned that this level of borrowing would create “a spiral of inflation, a spike in interest rates, or a loss of confidence in the currency.” It has not.



Still solid despite mounting deficits

This is not the time to worry about debt, said Robin Harding in the *Financial Times*. The “safe” level of national debt depends on interest rates and the rate of economic growth. As long as the long-run economy is growing faster than interest rates, “there is room before debt becomes a problem.” And right now the

U.S. is issuing debt with an interest rate of just 0.65 percent. The experience of Japan, which has lived with high levels of debt for years, is instructive: When Japan has tried to cut spending, it has ended up slowing the economy and then spent more on stimulus, so “attempts to cut its budget deficit often made debt worse, not better.”

Stocks: Dow Jones average drops Exxon

The Dow Jones industrial average kicked out ExxonMobil, the index’s oldest member, in its biggest shake-up in seven years, said Sarah Ponczek and Katherine Greifeld in *Bloomberg.com*. The rejection marks “a stunning fall from grace” for Exxon, “the world’s biggest company as recently as 2011.” It has been part of the Dow index since 1928, when it was called Standard Oil of New Jersey. But the market’s embrace of technology stocks comes at the expense of the oil giant; Pfizer and Raytheon Technologies were also removed this week. In their place come Honeywell International, biotech firm Amgen, and Salesforce, “one of the best-performing stocks” of the last decade.

IPOs: Ant Group leads high-profile offerings

A flurry of filings this week promises a busy fall for IPOs, said Luisa Beltran in *Barron’s*. The headliner is Jack Ma’s Ant Group, jewel of the Alibaba e-commerce empire. Ant disclosed profits of \$3.1 billion in the first half of 2020—an impressive number that exceeded most observers’ expectations. Listing in Hong Kong and Shanghai, it is “expected to be the biggest IPO ever.” Snowflake, a cloud-data warehouse, and Asana, a software provider, also filed paperwork to go public, joining a “rejuvenated IPO market” that will also include Palantir and Airbnb this fall.

Facebook: Zuckerberg’s anti-TikTok campaign

Facebook’s Mark Zuckerberg helped “stoke Washington’s fears” about Chinese tech companies, said Georgia Wells in *The Wall Street Journal*. “In a private dinner at the White House in late October, Zuckerberg made the case to President Trump that the rise of Chinese internet companies threatens American business and should be a bigger concern than reining in Facebook.” While publicly Zuckerberg has spoken against a U.S. ban on the video-sharing network, “few tech companies have as much to gain from TikTok’s travails.”

Media: Tabloid titan Pecker out at National Enquirer

Longtime *National Enquirer* chief David Pecker was removed as chief executive of the newspaper’s parent company, American Media, after a merger, said Ben Smith in *The New York Times*. Known for his close association with President Trump, Pecker helped to “catch and kill” former Playboy model Karen McDougal’s story of an affair with Trump. More recently, Pecker was accused by Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos of “extortion and blackmail.” Hedge fund Chatham Asset Management, the principal owner of American Media, had pushed Pecker “to sell the *Enquirer* after the publication found itself under federal scrutiny.”

‘Finders keepers,’ hedge funds say

Citigroup is blaming human error after wiring \$900 million to lenders to the cosmetics company, Revlon, said Elisa Martinuzzi in *Bloomberg.com*. The lenders had been at odds with Revlon and Citi, claiming that Revlon had been “pilaging” the collateral on its loans and was in default. Last week, Citi, which had planned to pay the lenders’ group the interest on the disputed loans, instead paid the entire principal in what Citi calls a “simple human lapse.” Unfortunately, the lenders, led by the hedge fund Brigade Capital—which received \$176 million—refuse to return the money, saying they have simply been paid money they are owed. Now this “embarrassing cock-up” is playing out in court. “In the who’s who of payment errors, Citi isn’t the worst.” Deutsche Bank erroneously wired \$25 billion in a derivatives trade in 2014, and then again made a \$33 billion payment mistake in 2018.

Capitalism: A pledge of reform, one year on

It's been a year since nearly 200 of the country's most powerful CEOs signed on to a remarkable letter, said **Andrew Edgecliffe-Johnson** and **Billy Nauman** in the *Financial Times*. The document, issued by the Business Roundtable, "redefined the purpose of America's corporations to emphasize their commitments to customers, employees, suppliers, and communities." In last place on that list of "stakeholders" were the investors, a dramatic departure from the long-held assumption that big business should always put shareholders first. The chaos caused by the pandemic has given those CEOs, who include Amazon's Jeff Bezos and Walmart's Doug McMillon, a chance to live up to their promises. One survey by Just Capital, a nonprofit that tracks corporations' impact on society, found that firms "whose CEOs signed it performed better than others in providing everything from paid sick leave to financial assistance" during the Covid-19 crisis. Yet critics call the Roundtable letter toothless, and say that its vague promises make it hard to "hold boards to account for their stakeholder pledges."

The Roundtable promise has proved to be "worse than meaningless," said **Jerry Useem** in *The Atlantic.com*. In the first four weeks after the coronavirus hit the U.S., businesses that signed "were almost 20 percent more prone to announce layoffs or furloughs" than similar companies that didn't join the pledge. Signers were also "less likely to donate to relief efforts, less likely to



Bezos: Looking out for stakeholders?

offer customer discounts, and less likely to shift production to pandemic-related goods." Moreover, "signers actually paid out 20 percent *more* of their capital" in dividends to shareholders than non-signers. The new capitalism looks much like the old capitalism.

Amen to that, said **Andy Puzder** in *The Wall Street Journal*. Shareholder capitalism has "created the greatest period of prosperity in human history." Businesses do "enormous social good" precisely by rewarding investors for funding businesses

that benefit consumers. Stakeholder capitalism would imperil that prosperity by shifting firms' focus away from profit, "reducing the incentive to invest and the capital available for growth." The result would be fewer jobs, lower pay, less innovation—and smaller returns in your 401(k).

It's shortsighted to think about success in terms of Wall Street's "one-year time horizon," said **Judith Samuelson** in *Qz.com*. Today, on average, "over 90 percent of profits of public companies are paid out in the form of dividends or share repurchases." That's up from 50 percent in the 1970s. This is not a good formula for the "long-term goals of corporate health." A "growing number of employee-led campaigns reflect impatience for change." But "you can't dismantle a half-century of shareholder primacy" in a single year.

What the experts say

Should you take that buyout?

Many struggling companies are offering employees buyouts during the recession, said **Arianne Cohen** in *Bloomberg Businessweek*. But whether you should take a package depends on your situation. People nearing retirement who've been offered a sweet deal—one-and-a-half years of salary plus continuation of medical benefits—"may be thrilled to hang up the saddle earlier than planned." But if you need or want to keep working and think you might have trouble finding a new gig—"think pandemic economy, downsizing industries, ageism, etc."—hold your fire before saying yes. Chat with HR and find out how many employees they want to lose, and how many offers have been extended. Sometimes, a "letter is a polite memo to get packing"; other times, companies extend more offers than needed, "and your job may be safe if others say yes."

'Main Street' program has few takers

The Federal Reserve has barely tapped a \$600 billion emergency lending program for midsize companies "struggling amid the coronavirus pandemic," said **Paul Kiernan** in *The Wall Street Journal*. The Main Street program, which offers companies \$250,000 to \$25 million, "had generated loans of just \$496.8 mil-

lion" as of last week, a tiny fraction of its potential funds. A Congressional oversight panel "urged the Treasury Department and Federal Reserve to move as swiftly as is feasible" to improve the program. The panel found stronger businesses were able to rely on their existing credit lines, while some companies that could benefit did not know about Main Street. Only 160 of the 522 lenders registered with the program have publicized that they're accepting loan applications from new customers.

Strategies for a weaker dollar

There are ways for investors to benefit from the falling dollar, said **Evie Liu** in *Barrons.com*. The greenback's value has dropped 10 percent relative to other major currencies in the past five months, and some analysts believe this is more than a temporary swoon. Investors who want to protect themselves from a weakening dollar "could dial up their allocation to international assets." Since foreign-based companies report earnings in the local currency, "U.S. investors will enjoy a larger gain when translating those numbers into dollars." If you're feeling deeply pessimistic about the greenback, you can "directly bet on foreign currencies through the Invesco DB US Dollar Index Bearish ETF," which profits if the dollar drops.

Charity of the week



The **Cure Alzheimer's Fund** (curealz.org) supports cutting-edge research into preventing, slowing, and reversing the degenerative brain disease. Since its founding in 2004, the Massachusetts-based nonprofit has awarded more than \$100 million in research funding, helping more than 425 innovative scientific projects around the world. These projects have explored areas such as the relationship between cholesterol and Alzheimer's, how our gut microbiome can affect the brain, and whether nanoparticles in air pollution might be connected to the debilitating condition. The fund also launched the Alzheimer's Genome Project in 2005, the first large-scale family-based study of its kind. Researchers with the project have so far identified nearly 1,000 genetic mutations that play a role in protecting people from the disease or in increasing their vulnerability.

Each charity we feature has earned a four-star overall rating from *Charity Navigator*, which rates not-for-profit organizations on the strength of their finances, their governance practices, and the transparency of their operations. Four stars is the group's highest rating.

Economy: Calamity looms as federal aid stops

Americans are “approaching a dire turning point” as we head toward fall without another economic aid package in sight, said Joe Pinsker in *The Atlantic.com*. Roughly 1 in 6 households reported recently that they have not been able to afford food during the pandemic, while one out of ten adults have said “they haven’t been able to pay rent or their mortgage in time.” The \$2 trillion CARES package passed in March provided “much-needed support” for millions, but still it wasn’t enough to “completely protect American families from the pandemic’s financial harms.” Then the support abruptly stopped. That has left people like Henderson Belle, a furloughed airport worker supporting a disabled daughter, wondering where they will find the money for rent, food, and auto payments.



Double-digit unemployment and an abrupt cut in aid

President Trump’s executive actions haven’t yielded much relief, said Jeff Stein and Tony Romm in *The Washington Post*. While jobless claims rose again last week, only two states, Arizona and Texas, have started sending the extra \$300 per week in unemployment insurance that Trump requested after the previous \$600 expanded benefits expired in July. Other states have been approved to extend aid, but because of technical challenges such as outdated computer systems, “some states may not be able to send new payments out until the end of September.” Economists are starting to worry about a “double-dip recession,” said Stephen Gandel in *CBSNews.com*, meaning the economy could “start to turn down again before it has fully recovered.”

We do still have a buffer of \$1 trillion to prop up the economy, said Tim Duy in *Bloomberg.com*. Personal savings “surged from March through June as fiscal support boosted incomes and shutdowns constrained spending.” In the long lockdown, Americans have set aside an estimated \$931 billion more than they would have without the pandemic. Meanwhile, consumer debt has also fallen by \$100 billion. So there’s a lot of money still “sitting idle” that consumers can turn to in a crunch, or spend as the economy improves. Indeed, the recovery gained steam in July, said David Harrison and Paul Hannon in *The Wall Street Journal*. Even with coronavirus cases rising, manufacturing and services activity rose, “thanks to returning customers, new marketing campaigns, and the easing of lockdowns overseas.”

“There are two economies forming right now,” said Catherine Rampell in *The Washington Post*: “A buoyant recovery atop a possible depression.” For higher-income, college-educated, white-collar workers, “the recession is largely over.” Homes are selling at a record pace, and “retirement accounts are flush.” But the reality is far different for the lower-wage, non-college degreed, blue-collar workers “once employed in restaurants, bars, hotels, salons, gyms, and retail stores.” President Trump’s “beloved working class has increasingly become an involuntary nonworking class, and Trump doesn’t bat an eye.” How long can these two economies diverge before “the Americans left behind start to notice?”

Your market timing is likely wrong

Barry Ritholtz
Bloomberg.com

“I am both fascinated and horrified” by those investors who try to time the market, said Barry Ritholtz. Many people like to think of themselves as pretty good at consistently buying low and selling high. Maybe you’re one of them. If so, ask yourself if you were among the lucky few who managed to sell “equities in February near the highs” and buy back in after the 34 percent collapse. Timing like that is both “emotionally challenging to execute and more costly than many people realize.” Most of the time, an exit from equities is motivated by emotion. “I almost never hear investors say, ‘Everything is going great. Liquidate all my holdings immediately!’” But

that’s essentially what you need to do “to catch the market at the top.” More often, the exit is “capitulation.” The markets fall and investors panic. “That strategy is never the recipe for strong market returns.” Re-entering is even harder. Most of us aren’t programmed to be contrarian. Catching the precise market bottom requires “conviction in your ability to do what nearly all investors cannot” and the discipline to follow that conviction “despite the mayhem” in the news. And “for the small chance of getting the timing right,” remember that you could be paying higher taxes on short-term gains. So do yourself a favor: Ride it out.

Yes, those ‘gigs’ can just disappear

Megan McArdle
The Washington Post

California shouldn’t drive Uber, Lyft, and other gig companies out of town, said Megan McArdle. The ride-sharing platforms are currently engaged in a “high-stakes game of chicken” with the state, which is attempting to force them to comply with a new labor law, AB5. The law is supposed to “benefit gig workers, because it would mean that many would suddenly have secure jobs with—cue the trumpets—employee benefits!” But AB5’s boosters didn’t seem to consider that the gig companies might simply fire their California contractors and “redistribute their work to other states.” Several companies—including Vox, a media company whose journalists led cheers

for the law—have already done just that. Now Uber and Lyft, which are supporting a ballot measure to reverse the law, say they will leave if it doesn’t change. California should believe them. Maybe when business was booming you could “believe that Uber and Lyft could afford to jack up their prices and reorganize themselves as mass employers of low-skilled labor, with all the internal bureaucracy, rigid scheduling, and picayune management controls of a Walmart or a McDonald’s.” Now that’s preposterous. Moving on will ding Uber and Lyft, but the one left behind will be “the residents who depend on these companies for income, transport, and vital services.”

The tennis star who found a trailblazing partner

Angela Buxton

1934–2020

Angela Buxton and Althea Gibson were among the top tennis talents of their era, but

neither could secure a doubles partner ahead of the 1956 French Open. Buxton, a British Jew, and Gibson, an African-American, were outcasts in the genteel and mostly white sport. The pair decided to partner at Roland Garros and also faced off in the women's singles semifinals. During the third set, Gibson's bra strap broke, and Buxton embraced Gibson to protect her modesty in front of the hollering crowd. Gibson went on to win the match and the singles tournament, becoming the first black major champion. A day after that triumph, Gibson and Buxton won the doubles crown. "It never entered my head to do anything else except befriend her," Buxton said of Gibson in 2006. "She was much warmer than the English people."

Buxton was born in Liverpool to a father who owned "a chain of cinemas," said *The Times* (U.K.). To escape German bombing raids during World War II, Buxton evacuated to South Africa with her mother and brother. There she took up tennis and played hopscotch with the maid's daughter; Buxton "was furious when she was told



that white children could not play with black children." After the war, Buxton became one of England's top youth players, but anti-Semitism kept her out of elite clubs. In 1952, she and her mother moved to Los Angeles, said *The Washington Post*, only to be denied membership at the Los Angeles Tennis Club "because they were Jewish."

On a tennis tour of India in 1955, Buxton "noticed that Gibson was spending much of her time alone and befriended her," said *The Guardian* (U.K.). They became an unbeatable doubles duo in 1956, winning the French championship and Wimbledon. Buxton retired in 1957—she went on to open a tennis academy in London—and Gibson put down her racket the following year. "The pair stayed in touch but had not spoken for a while when, in 1995, Buxton suddenly got a phone call from Gibson." The American sounded suicidal, having become destitute after several major health crises. Buxton helped raise nearly \$1 million for her friend, who was able to live in comfort until her death in 2003. Last year, Buxton attended the unveiling of a bust honoring Gibson at the site of the U.S. Open in New York City. "It's about bloody time," she said of the statue.

The virtuoso who elevated the classical guitar

Julian Bream

1933–2020

Julian Bream redefined what could be done with the classical guitar. If Andrés Segovia

established the guitar's credibility as an instrument for the classical concert stage, then Bream broadened its capabilities. The British musician pushed the guitar beyond its Spanish roots and helped create a new repertoire by commissioning dozens of works from major contemporary composers, including Benjamin Britten, Malcolm Arnold, and Toru Takemitsu. A tireless touring artist and charismatic performer, he served as an ambassador for the instrument, releasing dozens of recordings and winning four Grammys. He also did much to revive interest in the lute, exhuming neglected Elizabethan works and forming a period-instrument ensemble, the Julian Bream Consort, to perform them. The guitar has "got something exotic and mysterious about it," he said in 1967, "which is appealing in an unexotic and unmysterious age."

Bream was born in south London to a home-maker mother and a father who worked as a commercial artist, said *The Daily Telegraph* (U.K.) His father was "an amateur jazz guitarist who took his son to hear the playing of Django Reinhardt"



and gave him a guitar on his 11th birthday. "A child prodigy," Bream studied piano and cello at the Royal College of Music; his guitar was banned because it distracted the other students, "particularly the female ones." After a stint in the army, where he played jazz guitar in a dance band, Bream "tried to establish his career in earnest," said *The New York Times*. He played on movie soundtracks and in the pit bands for radio plays. In 1951, Bream made his debut as a solo classical guitarist at London's Wigmore Hall, and his profile began to rise.

"A half-century of incessant touring and intense recording was now begun," said *The Times* (U.K.). Bream often served as his own booking agent, traveling solo and pocketing fees in cash. Offstage, his days were "punctuated by seemingly endless quantities of women, drink, and cigarettes." He retired from the concert stage in 2002 and stopped playing entirely after a 2011 fall, which damaged his left hand and broke both hips. Bream shrugged at his situation. "There's nothing sad about not playing anymore," he said. "The thing I feel a little annoyed about is that I know I'm a better musician than I was at 70, but I can't prove it."

The muse and manager who inspired Gabriel García Márquez

In 1965, Gabriel García Márquez shut himself away in his Mexico City home and began work on his debut novel. For the next 18 months,

Mercedes Barcha

1932–2020

Mercedes Barcha made sure that her journalist husband wasn't

disturbed by bills or the outside world. When García Márquez finally emerged, Barcha asked, "Did you really finish it? We owe \$12,000." She pawned her hair dryer and a blender so they could afford the postage to send the manuscript to García Márquez's editor in Argentina. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, a time-bending tale based on the history of the couple's native Colombia, would go on to sell nearly 50 million copies and help García Márquez win the Nobel Prize in literature in 1982. Being born a Pisces and marrying Barcha, García Márquez said in 1973, were the two most important events in his life. Thanks to them, "I have managed to survive as a writer."

Born in northern Colombia, Barcha first met García Márquez when she was 9 and he was 13 while on a family vacation in the coastal town of Sucre, said *BBC.com*. The pair courted for years—the author wrote that he found her beautiful and mysterious, "with an illusionist's talent for evading questions"—and married in 1958.

Barcha freed García Márquez from the "exigencies of everyday life," said *The New York Times*. She took care of money matters, acted as a gatekeeper, and ensured their homes around the world were identically decorated, with the same white furniture and modern art. Many of the female characters who appeared in García Márquez's stories were inspired by the "sharp-witted" Barcha. "Mercedes permeates all my books," said the writer, who died in 2014. "There's traces of her everywhere."

The making of Stephen Miller

Family financial setbacks led to Miller attending a diverse California high school with many poor immigrants, said journalist Jean Guerrero. His resentments later came to shape national policy.

STEPHEN MILLER STARTED at Santa Monica High School in 1999. His high school years came amid a period of family turmoil. Miller's father, Michael, was having financial troubles and fighting several legal battles related to his real estate company, including a fight with his brother, whom he later permanently separated from the family with a no-contact order in a settlement agreement. The family had moved out of a million-dollar home in a wealthy white neighborhood to a slightly smaller house in a more diverse neighborhood. Michael Miller would refinance the house three times in the next four years.

Rather than attending a private school the way Michael's youngest son later did, his oldest son, Stephen, found himself at a diverse public school, which celebrated Día de los Muertos and Cinco de Mayo. The year before Miller started high school, Santa Monica had experienced eight gang-related shootings within a couple of weeks, resulting in five deaths, including one across from the high school. The high school was experiencing what administrators called "a two-schools phenomenon." One part went on to Ivy League and top universities; the other part dropped out.

In high school, Miller discovered conservative talk radio: *The Larry Elder Show*. In the 1990s, Elder was a rising star, broadcast in the afternoon on KABC/790 across Los Angeles. A *Los Angeles Times* article described Elder as "a darling of white listeners who seemed to almost gush when they telephoned him on KABC talk radio, astonished to find a black man who wasn't going to chastise them." In 2001, Elder published the book *The Ten Things You Can't Say in America*. In it, he argues that black people are more racist than white people, and that the problems of black people come from a lack of self-determination.

Elder wrote, "At American dinner tables all across the country, most parents urge their children to work hard, study hard, and prepare. But in black households, how much dinner-table talk revolves around 'the white man done me wrong,' rather than focuses on grit, hard work, and preparation?" Like



Trump's speeches used Miller's dystopian rhetoric about immigrant crime.

Rush Limbaugh, another formative influence on Miller, Elder dedicated a chapter to media bias and belittled the idea of sexism, saying, "Smart women simply overlook boorish behavior by men."

Miller called in to his show and invited him to speak at his high school. Elder agreed. He came to campus and stood in front of a diverse crowd of Santa Monica High School students, including Miller. He told them they had to learn how to pull themselves up by the bootstraps and not use race as social capital.

Maria Vivanco, a classmate who was president of the school's Chicano activist organization, MEChA, recalls that Miller seemed aroused by Elder's speech. Vivanco watched the pleasure in his face and felt herself getting really angry. She stood up and confronted her classmate. "You are a racist!" she said. Miller shouted back, telling her she was wrong and didn't understand. In retrospect, she says, "I think, looking back, he didn't like to be confronted by a Latina girl, a teenage girl."

IN HIS JUNIOR year at Santa Monica High School, Stephen Miller ran for student announcer. His father had gotten elected student body president at another high school 35 years earlier with a memorably subversive speech that turned him into a school hero. Like Michael Miller, Stephen would also give a speech that people would remember for years. He sauntered onstage before a large, noisy crowd.

"Hi, I'm Stephen Miller," he said. He gripped the microphone and squinted his face with practiced confidence. He was the only candidate, he said, "who really stands out. I will say and I will do things that no one else in their right mind would say or do." He continued, his face reddening with emotion, his voice rising to a shout, "Am I the only one who is sick and tired of being told to pick up my trash when we have plenty of janitors who are paid to do it for us?"

The school had thousands of students and about 10 custodians, mostly people of color. Students erupted in a roar of disapproval.

Student assembly president Coleen Armstrong-Yamamura was worried the students were

about to riot. "I just remember the crowd at that point going kind of nuts. We had very volatile racial relations," she says. She thought Miller's comments were classist and racist. "I can't remember if somebody threw things at him, but I felt it was on the brink of getting there," she says. She told him his time was up. "You need to get down," she said. He kept talking, relishing the moment. "So I took him physically, and I pushed him off the stage."

When he got to Duke University two years later, there were signs that Miller would pick up right where he left off in high school. Freshman year, he lived on the second floor of Pegram Dormitory. The dorm was on East Campus, with redbrick Jeffersonian architecture along a verdant quad. During orientation, a second-floor resident adviser asked his group of male residents to gather outside. Seated on the grass, the counselor asked them to introduce themselves: name, hometown, something about themselves. Most remained seated. But Miller sprang to his feet.

"Hi, I'm Stephen Miller," he said, just as he'd started his high-school speech. "I'm from Santa Monica, California—and I like guns." His spectators chuckled, unsure if he was joking. He sat down. The introductions continued. But Miller had made an impression. He had a nickname now: *Guns*. His dorm mates called him Stephen "Guns" Miller.

The dorm residents gathered in the first-

floor common room for pizza, salad, and refreshments. They were getting to know one another during this first chapter away from home. When Miller threw his plate away, he missed the trash can and leftovers spilled on the floor. He walked away. A classmate asked, “Are you not gonna pick that up?” Miller replied, “What hellhole are you from? We have people here for that.” Another recalls having lunch with him in the cafeteria. Every now and then, Miller would leave his tray on the table, saying it wasn’t his responsibility to clean up. One classmate recalls that he tossed his tray on the ground, saying, “There were people there paid to clean it up.”

A few weeks into freshman year, a graduate assistant in charge of Pegram Dorm put a temporary lockdown on the common room because students were leaving it so messy. The dorm manager taped up a piece of paper letting students know that the custodial staff was not there to enable their filthy lifestyles. It encouraged them to pick up after themselves like grown-ups. Miller taped up a typed two-page reply, protesting the punishment. Classmate Sean Hou says it described cleanliness as “a fine personal virtue, but ultimately it’s the responsibility of the janitorial staff to ensure that it’s clean, and it’s too bad that \$40,000 a year doesn’t make sure that people understand that.”

ON JUNE 16, 2015, Trump rode down the golden escalator at Trump Tower, his yellow eyebrows and hair glimmering in his gilded atrium. He pursed his lips at the podium, “Whoa,” he said, glancing at the crowd. “That is some group of people—thousands!” He was running for the Republican presidential nomination. Like Miller, Trump was an outsider to the Republican establishment. He said politically incorrect things. “When do we beat Mexico at the border? They’re laughing at us, at our stupidity, and now they’re beating us economically. They are not our friend.”

Then: “When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best. They’re not sending you. They’re not sending you. They’re sending people that have lots of problems, and they’re bringing those problems with (them). They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.” He evoked the image of a soiled America, “a dumping ground.”

People had belittled Miller all his life for his views, deriding him as he stood onstage demanding that custodians of color pick

up his trash. They called him racist. They called him classist. They questioned him. Here was a powerful magnate beaming Miller’s own thoughts into American homes across the nation. Miller felt a jolt of electricity. He told *The Washington Post* it was “as though everything that I felt at the deepest levels of my heart were now being expressed by a candidate for our nation’s highest office before a watching world.”



Miller was capable of a unique mind-meld with Trump.

Trump’s comments were widely perceived as racist. But he refused to apologize, telling CNN’s Don Lemon: “Someone’s doing the raping!”

Steve Bannon, Miller’s mentor and chief of the increasingly influential Breitbart News, was cringing a little. Trump’s campaign had potential, but he needed help. Trump was focused mostly on his wealth. He had singled out the issues that Bannon, Alabama Sen. Jeff Sessions, and Miller had talked about during their lengthy dinner the previous year as they plotted a populist nationalist insurgency: trade and immigration.

But Trump didn’t present solid policy solutions. He promised a border wall and that Mexico would pay for it. But the wall had been conceived by consultants Sam Nunberg and Roger Stone to get Trump to remember to talk about immigration. It was a mnemonic device, not a policy proposal. Experts knew transnational cartels were digging tunnels 90 feet underground in San Diego, the most fortified border area, with layered steel fencing, and that nearly half of all people in the country illegally were visa overstays who entered through airports and ports of entry.

Bannon reached out to the campaign and said he knew of a guy who could help. He could pull double duty: speechwriter and policy writer for Trump—two for one. Sessions gave Miller a glowing recommendation, comparing him to George W. Bush’s

political mastermind, Karl Rove.

But the campaign wasn’t convinced. Campaign manager Corey Lewandowski dragged his feet on hiring Miller. Miller started reaching out to Lewandowski directly, bombarding him with emails at 2 o’clock in the morning. “We have to talk immigration, we have to talk immigration,” Miller told him. “Let me come to the campaign,” he said. “Let me help draft your immigration policy.”

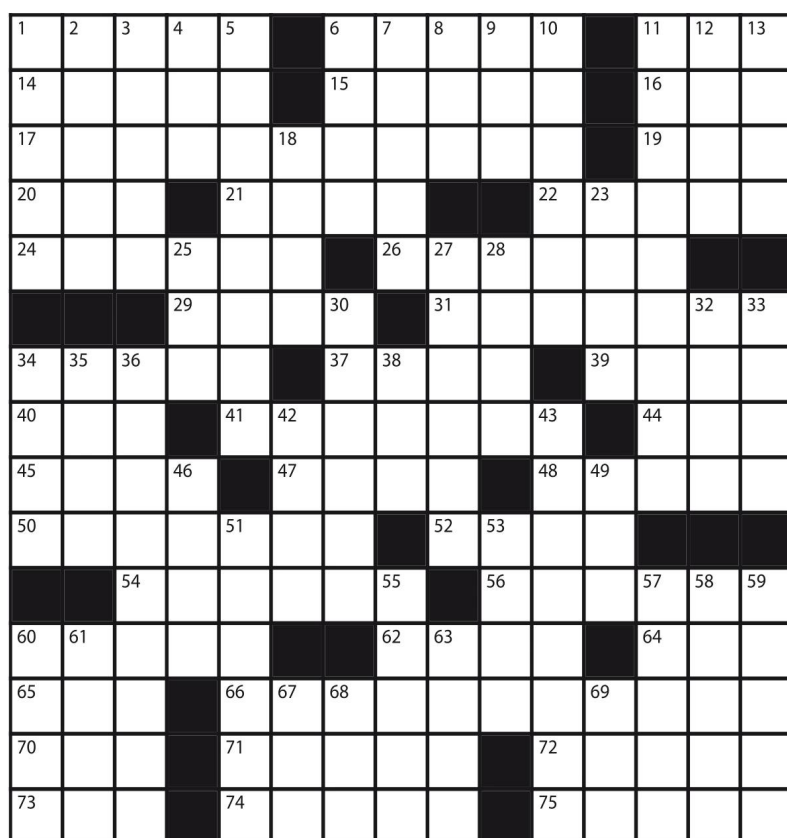
Miller put together an immigration plan for Trump. With references to murders, rapes, and beatings by people who lived in the United States without legal permission, the plan highlighted Miller’s passion for the macabre. “An illegal immigrant from Mexico, with a long arrest record, is charged with breaking into a 64-year-old woman’s home, crushing her skull and eye sockets with a hammer, raping her, and murdering her,” the immigration plan read.

It drew a contrast between Trump and “wealthy globe-trotting donors.” In Miller’s view, the rich—excluding Trump—had a nefarious plot to pollute the U.S., as did Mexico. He took the seed Trump introduced and adorned it: “Mexico’s leaders have been taking advantage of the United States by using illegal immigration to export the crime and poverty in their own country.... U.S. taxpayers have been asked to pick up hundreds of billions in health-care costs, housing costs, education costs, welfare costs, etc.”

The plan laid out steps to “Make America Great Again,” in addition to the wall: tripling ICE officers, implementing nationwide E-Verify, mass deportations, an end to “catch and release,” defunding “sanctuary cities,” enhanced penalties for visa overstays, an end to birthright citizenship, a requirement to hire American workers, and ending “welfare abuse.”

In January, the campaign announced it had hired Miller as a senior policy adviser. Ann Coulter, who in one article had compared migrants to cockroaches, tweeted: “I’M IN HEAVEN! Trump hires Sen. Sessions’ brain trust.... He’s not backing down on immigration.” Miller finally got to work for his idol. Surely, neither man knew how momentous it was.

Adapted from the book Hatemonger: Stephen Miller, Donald Trump, and the White Nationalist Agenda by Jean Guerrero. © 2020 by Jean Guerrero. Reprinted by permission of William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins.

Crossword No. 566: Weather You Know or Not by Matt Gaffney**ACROSS**

- 1 Finds actors for
6 Eagerly expect
11 "That dude?"
14 Like some committees
15 Japanese watch brand
16 Santa ___ winds
17 This California area hit 130 degrees on Aug. 16, the third-hottest temp ever recorded; it's also where the hottest-ever temp, 134 degrees, was recorded in 1913
19 Tricky to drive on
20 Animal with antlers
21 "Didn't mean to do that!"
22 City northeast of Jaipur
24 Container with a spout
26 You might have graduated with them
29 From square one
31 Like some thermometers
34 Italian for "milk"
37 Band with a lightning-bolt logo
39 RC, e.g.
40 Tokyo-born Yoko
41 This U.S. peak holds the record for most snowfall in a year (102 feet); from its name you'd guess different precipitation
44 Forty winks
45 "Let me have ___"
47 Fails to be
48 Ties, as the score
50 What aesthetes appreciate

DOWN

- 52 Buddy of Boo-Boo Bear
54 Milano of #MeToo
56 Some musicians
60 Soup kitchen tool
62 Ethan or Joel of film
64 "I'll pass on that"
65 Before now
66 In January 1943, the town of Spearfish in this state recorded the greatest 2-minute temperature change ever, going from -4 degrees Fahrenheit to +45 degrees
70 Rival of Levi's
71 Taken as a whole
72 Dug
73 Podcast features, sometimes
74 Collects, as benefits
75 Easy-to-identify flower
12 Move slowly
13 "Allow me"
18 Support a person who's running
23 One of 45's kids
25 Butter amount
27 Peculiar fact
28 Pleasant
30 Tailors measure them
32 Math genius Turing
33 Swimmers do them
34 Be lazy
35 Fighting against
36 During 2011's "Super Outbreak," a record 190 of these were recorded in a 24-hour period across six states
38 Early Start channel
42 Shows on TV
43 Elton John's real first name
46 Shriek
49 Guest in a special lounge
51 Response to an admiral, often
53 Essay in the NYT
55 Throw food at your little brother, e.g.
57 Mushroom in soups
58 Reviews on Yelp, e.g.
59 Disreputable
60 Chorus syllables
61 Got better, like cheddar
63 Units of resistance
67 Somebody
68 World's largest producer of petroleum
69 Soul creator

The Week Contest

This week's question: A 35-year-old Italian man's bid to force his parents to keep paying him a \$360 monthly stipend has been rejected by the nation's Supreme Court. In seven words or fewer, please come up with an advertising slogan for a law firm that specializes in representing parents who want to cut off support to their adult children.

Last week's contest: A lovestruck British man accidentally destroyed his home after he lit hundreds of tea-light candles in his apartment, poured two glasses of wine, and went to fetch his girlfriend to propose. The couple returned to find the apartment engulfed in flames. Please come up with the title of a romantic comedy about this hot love story.

THE WINNER: "Incendiary Proposal"
Stephen Elmore, San Francisco

SECOND PLACE: "Matchstruck"
Andrea Viani, Spring Lake, N.J.

THIRD PLACE: "Days of Wine and Hoses"
Bill Levine, Belmont, Mass.

For runners-up and complete contest rules, please go to theweek.com/contest.

How to enter: Submissions should be emailed to contest@theweek.com. Please include your name, address, and daytime telephone number for verification; this week, type "Child support" in the subject line. Entries are due by noon, Eastern Time, Tuesday, Sept. 1. Winners will appear on the Puzzle Page next issue and at theweek.com/puzzles on Friday, Sept. 4. In the case of identical or similar entries, the first one received gets credit.



◀ The winner gets a one-year subscription to *The Week*.

Sudoku

Fill in all the boxes so that each row, column, and outlined square includes all the numbers from 1 through 9.

Difficulty:
super-hard

4					1		3	
5	6			7	2	1		
					6		5	9
6	5					9		
8								1
		1					2	5
9	8		6					
		5	1	9			8	7
	7		8					2

Find the solutions to all *The Week's* puzzles online: www.theweek.com/puzzle.

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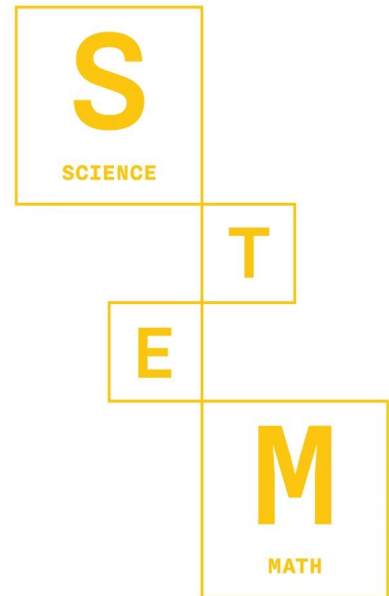


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